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MEAT, DRINK, AND PHYSIC.

A WEEK had scarcely elapsed from the publication of the Report on the Adulteration of Food, when the last remaining hope of getting any kind of wholesome diet was destroyed by the salutary but offensive details furnished by the Committee of Medical Officers of Health for London. We knew that we must give up all idea of enjoying breakfast. We had submitted with the best possible grace, under the circumstances, to eat a mixture of potatoes, plaster of Paris, alum, and sulphate of copper, instead of bread. We were aware that our butter was only coloured lard, and that the lard itself was probably adulterated with mutton suet and caustic lime. We had given up the hope of any better decoction than coffee composed of chicory and flavoured with London milk. Even the chicory, we grieved to learn, was as likely as not to be an injurious compound of sawdust, carrots, and Venetian red. Sausages always struck us as savoury, till we learned that the best country samples were made of "doubtful meat"—a phrase enough of itself to dispose of the stoutest appetite. The less objectionable specimens, it seems, may be composed of the choppings of slipped calves and measly pork; but perhaps the uncertainty of the doubtful meat is preferable to this. After such announcements on the best authority, breakfast was out of the question. But we still retained a strong belief in dinner. It is true that our stout was liable to be dosed with *coccus indicus* and *nux vomica*—that our pickles were invariably poisoned with copper—that cayenne was never to be met with except in fine London gin—that vinegar was sulphuric acid, and confectionary a compound of every imaginable poison that could be used as a pigment. Still, these were only the accessories of dinner; and we cherished with increased regard the one pure specimen in the midst of corruption—the joint of English beef or South-down mutton. Every day we found ourselves gradually diminishing the consumption of every other article in favour of the solitary food that could not be adulterated. We were fast approaching a purely carnivorous diet, and gloated over flesh that could not possibly be anything but what it seemed. Dr. CHALLICE and his colleagues are no doubt public benefactors in their instructive exposure of the frauds of butchers, but they have destroyed dinner as effectually as the Parliamentary Committee annihilated breakfast. Unless some remedy is found, without delay, it would be better, if we mean to eat and live, not to hear of dingy beef, with a sour and unwholesome smell—of soft, wet, and flabby mutton—of nauseous lamb, with pus in the areolar tissue—of liver filled with fibrinous coagula—of jelly-like tissue—and eyes pallid from disease. Yet this, it appears, is the sort of meat habitually offered for sale. To do them justice, the Medical Commissioners are not over fastidious. They speak lightly of mere putridity—they pronounce old ram quite wholesome—and have some doubt whether the presence of animalcules in the flesh is a serious objection. Their disclosures are far more nauseous than anything of this kind, and force us to acknowledge that we are daily in danger of feeding on cows that have died in parturition, sheep that have suffered from rot, measly pigs, and oxen that have been slaughtered to save their lives. Perhaps it is all for the best that the last delusive consolation should be snatched away. Now that it is once established that nothing is pure, nothing wholesome, nothing sound, the reaction cannot be far distant. An occasional adulteration, or a trifling admixture of poison, might be overlooked; but, when everything we can live on is corrupt, the evil cannot long be left without a remedy. If the present state of things were to continue, we should have to take a regular dose of physic after every meal, to correct the abominations of our daily sustenance. But that might only make matters worse; for the adulteration of drugs is even more extensively practised than the corruption of food.

What is the good of strengthening the stomach with scammony cooked up out of sand and resin, or of taking an alternative of jalap manufactured of powdered wood?

From these horrors we turn to the recommendations of the two Committees; but they furnish only the faintest possible hope for the future. Already the law has, with but small results, attempted to interfere. In the City, a Local Sewers' Act provides for the appointment of inspectors of slaughter-houses and meat, with authority to destroy whatever may appear unfit for the food of man. Officers under the Metropolitan Market Act and the Nuisances Removal Act have somewhat similar powers; and the Doctors content themselves with simply recommending that the same staff should be armed with the authority of all the different Acts, and that the inspectors should be trained to their duty by regular instruction in the symptoms of unsound meat. But if the existing law has failed hitherto, there is little chance of its becoming more effectual until more stringent measures are adopted towards offenders, and more extensive supervision practised by the meat detectives. The suggestions of the Committee of the House of Commons are still less cheering. They are prepared to put down poison, but they take under their protection the practice of "innocuous" adulteration, which they regard as one of the essential privileges involved in the idea of free trade. No matter how offensive or distasteful our food may be made, if it is not absolutely prejudicial to health, we are to look for no redress. Poisons themselves are only to be kept out of the pot by the force of certain legislative denunciations, which have already been tried in vain in the case of bread. The statute no doubt is rigorous enough, if it were only practically enforced. Very few people, we imagine, are aware that they may get their bakers fined 10*l.*, or imprisoned with hard labour for six months, for putting a grain of alum into a loaf. To mix potato-flour with professedly wheaten bread involves a penalty of 20*l.*; and it is a fineable offence to sell a loaf composed of mixed meal, unless it is marked with a Roman M. Who has not eaten a compound of potato and wheat, yet who ever saw a loaf stamped with a Roman M? But the Act does not stop here. It imposes severe punishments for the mere possession of articles of adulteration, and hits the true remedy by directing the publication of the names of offenders. The most spiteful legislator who had nauseated his food for months could not have devised a more thorough-going statute; and if it had not proved utterly useless in purifying our bread, we should have welcomed the suggestion to extend its provisions to all manner of eatables as the sure forerunner of the time when feeding shall again become a pleasure.

But severe enactments won't work themselves, and the public is far too indolent to be the guardian of its own stomach. Mr. SMITH may doubt his bread, and Mr. JONES may lose all relish for his meat, but neither of them will be at the pains and cost to consult, first, an analytical chemist, in order to prove the suspected offence, and then to fee a lawyer to conduct a prosecution against the baker or the butcher. The real remedy is obvious. The law must, of course, be extended so as to reach all abominable mixtures, whether deleterious or not. We cannot go on eating objectionable meals until doctors have settled the precise influence of every unauthorized ingredient upon our bodily health. When the law is perfected, it must be enforced; and the only way to secure this will be to appoint a body of detectives, like those employed by the Excise for fiscal purposes, to find out offenders and bring them to punishment. As for the quantum of the penalty, that is quite immaterial. A shilling fine would be enough in any case, if every conviction were duly published among the offender's trade connexion. Handbills in bold type proclaiming the fact that RICHARD CHIZZLE, Esq., was found guilty of riding

in a first-class carriage with a third-class ticket, are found to answer their purpose admirably; and few bakers would like to go their rounds with similar records of their offences staring them in the face. If such a mode of publication were thought beneath the dignity of a Government Board, any other system which would secure equal publicity would do as well. The *Lancet* Commission did some good, but its proclamations wanted the sanction of a judicial sentence. Give us active official prosecutors, and publish the names of their victims, and there is yet hope for our dinners and breakfasts.

SECRET DIPLOMACY.

IN the course of a harmless exchange of amenities between certain lovers of peace on either side of the Atlantic, the PRESIDENT of the Financial Reform Association of Liverpool lately took occasion to repeat the popular protest against secret diplomacy. Not the slightest difficulty had occurred in the amateur negotiation which had just been happily concluded. A score or two of philanthropists or politicians had assured the people of Philadelphia that they had not the slightest inclination for a war, and by return of post they received an equally amicable reply. With such facilities for international intercourse, it is thought worse than wasteful to employ Foreign Secretaries and Ministers Plenipotentiary. A meeting of a Committee, and an advertisement in the newspapers, supply a simpler diplomatic machinery. It does not seem to have occurred to the Financial Reform Association that some part of the facility which has characterized its operations may be owing to the careful avoidance of all matters of difference. If a disputed account could be summarily settled by an exchange of complimentary letters, litigation would be highly unnecessary. An underwriter who questions the validity of a policy, or the justice of a claim for loss, would only have to assure the shipowner or freighter of his perfect respect and esteem, and to call his attention to the proverbial uncertainty and expense of law. It does not appear that the amicable correspondents who reciprocally protest against a war, have in any manner touched on the question whether Ruatan is to be abandoned; yet even Financial Reform Associations must admit that demands for the evacuation of *de facto* possessions cannot in all instances be complied with. Neither the American Government nor our own has expressed any wish for war; but it is idle to affect not to be aware that a dispute has arisen. Diplomats may not yet have succeeded in their efforts to effect a compromise; but they have at least dealt with the facts as they exist. If pacific platitudes have any value, they may be collected in abundance from the pugnacious polemics of Mr. BUCHANAN, as well as from the courtly pleadings of Lord CLARENDON.

It must, however, be admitted that diplomacy has not of late been popular. The incredible imbecilities recorded in the earlier portion of the Russian Blue Books revolted the common sense of mankind. The sycophantic prostration of European statesmen before the Emperor NICHOLAS probably tempted him on to the aggressions which it ultimately became necessary to repress at the cost of war. The Vienna project for a compact between Russia and Turkey, which both parties, following the obvious meaning of the words, interpreted in an opposite sense to that contemplated by the framers of the document, could not have been outdone in absurdity by any volunteer association in Lancashire. The conduct of the negotiations at Paris was far more creditable to the Governments concerned; nor is there any reason to suppose that the influence of England has, since that time, been employed except in conformity with the interests and feelings of the nation. Grave blunders were made in the course of the American dispute, but the only indications of hostility proceeded from the Government of the United States. In both the controversies alluded to, it is probable that the popular sentiment would have been opposed to concession. It is possible that the Russian war might have been averted by a menacing attitude; but the fault of the diplomats employed was that they displayed too uncompromising an eagerness for peace. It is mere cant in the self-appointed representatives of popular feeling to accuse statesmen and aristocrats of being more warlike in their policy than the mass of the nation. A judicious advocate for the extension of democratic influence would urge against his opponents precisely the opposite charge.

Provincial Liberals are probably not aware that they owe their favourite phrase of "secret diplomacy" to no less an

authority than Mr. URQUHART. As it often happens in similar cases, the disciples repeat the formula in total ignorance of the meaning of their master. The secret diplomacy of the Oriental CASSANDRA is something worth protesting against. It means, not that statesmen forward despatches before they print them in the newspapers, but that a gigantic conspiracy against England is perpetually developing itself, with the Russian Cabinet for its head, and Lord PALMERSTON for its hand. The Minister whom Liberals affect to consider careless and indifferent is, according to the URQUHART creed, a superhuman prodigy of craft and wickedness. It is a common error to suppose that there was mismanagement in the Crimea. The English army was sent to Sebastopol to be sacrificed, probably, at so much per head—the price to be paid by Russia to her agent in England. OMAR PASHA sold his Turks, perhaps, cheaper; and as to Marshal PELISSIER, we have no certain information. Some confused and apocryphal hints of the great treason are familiar to the intelligent readers of the *Herald* and *Morning Advertiser*; but the full iniquity of secret diplomacy is only revealed to the immediate acolytes of the Prophet. Unfortunately, the warning is altogether useless, for the conspiracy envelops the world, and almost all mankind are accomplices. The war with Russia was one stage in the transaction—the peace with Russia was another. The French alliance, the Neapolitan remonstrance, the modification of maritime law—probably even Kansas and the Cincinnati platform—are portions of the infernal melodrama. BUCHANAN and FREMONT, WALKER and O'DONNELL, are but tools in the hands of the omniscient PALMERSTON, who alone knows his own motive for the complicated atrocities which he commits. The technical name of the operation is "secret diplomacy;" and the feeble plagiarists who pirate the label for their own worthless wares ought to be restrained by injunction.

In the more vulgar sense, secret diplomacy means the conduct of negotiations by individuals. The Financial Reform Association is perhaps the silliest public body in England, unless a rival claim may be put forward by the Administrative Reform Association of London; but, in both cases, it is probable that the members conduct their private affairs with a wisdom which by no means characterizes their public performances. No Liverpool merchant would employ an agent who had not learned to hold his tongue. Conflicting claims may give rise to a quarrel, notwithstanding every precaution; but the most certain mode of preventing an amicable settlement is to make them a subject of public discussion. The fault of English diplomats is, not that they transact business in the only practicable manner, but that their professional education too often estranges them from the opinions and sympathies of the nation. The occasional employment of negotiators trained in other departments of public life would tend, more than any other measure, to bring foreign policy into harmony with the real sentiments of the country.

We have never been made acquainted with any satisfactory reason why, eight or nine years ago, a few gentlemen at Liverpool should have undertaken to revise the financial affairs of the country. Their efforts have been principally remarkable for uniform failure. Since the commencement of the Association, it has exercised no influence whatever on fiscal or economical legislation. Some of the pamphlets which it has published have evidently advocated repudiation of the National Debt—others have framed easy schemes for the reduction of the Civil List, or for the imposition of taxes tending to correct the inequalities of fortune—but it has done no good, and the best that can be said for it is that it has tried in vain to do harm. It is difficult to understand the connexion of Financial Reform with secret diplomacy; but when men cannot do their own work, or have no work to do, they are apt to find other employment. Idle clerks scribble on their desks. American legislators whittle sticks with their knives. The Administrative Reform Association held a meeting about the siege of Kars. The Financial Reform Association denounces the privacy of Government despatches. When volunteer patriots undertake a particular branch of reform, they ought to be satisfied with elaborate failure in the department which they have selected.

The fitness of the Liverpool diplomats for their task may be inferred from a blunder which they have already committed. In an address to the people of Philadelphia, they are guilty of the flagrant impropriety of complimenting one of the rival candidates for the Presidency. Colonel FREMONT has thought proper to denounce secret diplomacy,

probably with a special reference to Mr. BUCHANAN'S filibustering Ostend memorandum; and the Financial Reformers cannot refrain from quoting the party manifesto of the Republican candidate. It follows that their proceedings, if they produced any effect whatever, would give offence to a party which has probably a majority in the Union, and almost certainly a majority in the State of which Mr. BUCHANAN is a citizen, and Philadelphia the capital. Neither Lord CLARENDON nor any of his predecessors can be accused of so obvious a solecism in good-breeding. Englishmen have little interest in the result of the Presidential election, and no right whatever to express their predilections to the Americans. A Financial Association, charged with the conduct of foreign affairs, would involve the nation in war in six months, if it had not previously reduced it to bankruptcy.

BATHING TOWNS.

THE last great movement of the population of England was caused by the establishment of the seats of manufacturing industry in the northern counties, recommended as they were to the speculator by their facilities of access to the coal country and to the sea. Another shifting of our countrymen is proceeding at the present moment, under the influence of an agency hardly less powerful than the love of gain—the pursuit of health. The increase of population during late years in all towns or neighbourhoods which have a name for pure air or equable climate, is absolutely marvellous. The barren county of Surrey is gradually overflowing through its reputation for healthiness. Devonshire is growing crowded. The little Isle of Wight swarms like a bee-hive; and we have four handsome first-class towns—Bath, Cheltenham, Leamington, and Brighton—which absolutely depend for their existence on their salubrity. The movement takes different, and sometimes curious forms. London, as everybody knows, is being rapidly transformed into something like a coral reef—a circle of teeming life round the outskirts, with a honeycombed, inorganic mass at the centre. And as the metropolis, so the country. England is suffering a sea-change, and a rim of pasteboard-like bathing towns is completing itself round her coasts. Few whose attention has not been specially called to the subject are aware of the extraordinary extent to which sea-bathing-places have multiplied during the last four or five years. On innumerable spots where, in 1850, there was nothing but a fishing or smuggling village, a whole town may be seen in 1856. Nothing can be more impartial than the considerations which have led to the creation of these nests of lodging-houses. If there is a cliff, up rises a bathing-town for dyspeptic sufferers. If there is no cliff, there grows a sea-side paradise for pulmonary patients. If there is a railway near, the place is easy of access—if there is none within twenty miles, it is fashionable and select. An open prospect of sea, and a speculator to run up lath-and-plaster villas, are all the conditions that need concur to produce one of these retreats. Strange to say, scarcely one of these speculations has been unsuccessful; and the bathing classes of English society are believed not to have as yet half accommodation enough.

In the old days, when the Court of the STUARTS went to drink the waters at Tunbridge, it was thoroughly understood that half the enjoyment consisted in the discomfort which had to be submitted to. Many of the fine ladies went literally under canvas, and had the paint washed off their faces with rain straight from heaven. Even in the reigns of the first GEORGES, the periwigged personages who flocked to the well at Bath were content to hide themselves in attics over shops, and never dreamed for a moment of carrying with them the luxuries of London. It is curious to observe how the tradition survives, and how completely it is supposed that people who leave their homes and occupations in search of health will consent to rough it. You are expected to be uncomfortable, and uncomfortable you are made. It is still the same Bedouin life, though you take up your quarters in a stuccoed villa with Gothic ornamentations. What a miracle of inconvenience is a furnished house at the sea-side! Who can explain the invariable recurrence of impossible chairs, impracticable tables, and immovable blinds? Cold and windy weather pretty generally interposes itself in an English autumn, and yet not a window in these wonderful buildings will close, not a door will fasten, not a fireplace will suffer a fire—in fact, not half the chimneys are really pervious. Such are the drawbacks on a house of which you appropriate the whole; but what are they to the troubles of

the man who takes himself and his belongings into furnished apartments? In the first case, you live in an uncomfortable republic—in the second, under a grinding despotism. Your *propriétaire* is a tyrant, who claims a vested interest in the fleecing of his slave. Though you pay him exorbitantly, he is discontented if you use his rooms too much in the day, and you are happy if he does not locate a fractious infant in the adjoining apartment to drive you out of doors in spite of yourself. He does not like you to have your own servants with you, because they eat up cold meat; but he thinks you exacting if you require more than one-tenth part of the services of a draggle-tailed domestic. In answer to your complaints of the terror that creepeth by night, he tells you that you brought it with you yourself. In reply to your representations concerning alumed bread, tough meat, and stale vegetables, he assures you that you are fortunate, in the existing state of the town, to obtain provisions at all. In truth, he, the butcher, the baker, and the greengrocer are thoroughly and honestly persuaded that they have a vested interest in you. They tell you sometimes, in confidence, that they must make a living, and have only two months of the year to make it in. Even the keeper of bathing-machines, as may be seen by the recent correspondence from Dover, conceives that he has his rights—he thinks people wicked and unreasonable in objecting to being drowned.

We are brought to the verge of a phenomenon which shows more plainly than anything else how strong and universal the impression is that a trip to the sea-side is *pro tanto* a return to savage life. We have been told that at the American watering-places—Newport, in Rhode Island, for example—ladies and gentlemen make appointments over night to walk together into the waves next morning. In the clear rocky pools at the base of the Pyrenees, a bearded beau will sometimes be seen playing dominoes against a fair partner on a floating board. We in England are gradually introducing the same marine fusion of the sexes—only, unfortunately, while in America and France everybody has an appropriate costume, the attire is confined in England to the weaker half of creation. Really, this is a delicate subject, and some excuse must be asked for handling it. We are quite aware that *Paterfamilias*, who writes indignation-letters from Margate to the *Times*, is a bit of a prude; but it is not necessary to go to the crowded Kentish watering-places to convince oneself that in this case he is more than justified. It really does seem as if English ladies, in addition to those curious hats, put on a new set of manners and morals during their annual visit to the sea-side. No doubt, the appearance is worse than the reality, but the scandal to third persons is not the less for that; and surely it is not desirable that these bathing customs should be the first thing to strike an intelligent foreigner on his landing at Newhaven, Folkestone, or Dover. If the corporations of the bathing-towns will not exert themselves to mark out separate localities for bathers, and to enforce the separation, there will be nothing left except for gentlemen to remedy a scandal which is certainly not of *their* creation, and to consent to go into the water in much the same costume which the PRINCE-CONSORT is said, we believe unjustly, to have devised for the undress of a heavy dragon.

PRIVATEERING.

AMERICAN diplomacy is rarely persuasive. With the great merit of proceeding *fortiter in re*, it is seldom or never conducted *suaviter in modo*, especially when England is concerned. Mr. MARCY'S answer to the communication of the resolutions on maritime laws adopted by the Congress of Paris was quite consistent with former precedents. In a private negotiation, it might have been thought indelicate to dwell on the contingencies of a possible quarrel; for, though all contracts in fact assume that interests are likely to clash, that disputes may possibly arise, and that it is prudent to exact securities against unjustifiable aggression, the offensive part of the transaction is for the most part kept in the background. The old preambles to treaties generally recite the intention of the parties to cultivate and improve a perpetual friendship; and if it is necessary to allude to an eventual rupture, the passage is decorously introduced by some pious deprecation of the misfortune. The American Secretary of State follows a different principle of composition. As the laws of war are undoubtedly not intended to apply to a state of peace, he thinks it convenient to make his language tally with the facts of the case; and, without the smallest affecta-

tion of reserve, he at once proceeds to consider how the Paris code of maritime warfare would bear on the interests of either belligerent in a war between England and the United States. The probable disadvantage which his own country might suffer from the abolition of privateering at once determines his answer to the proposal of the European Powers. The far larger changes which he throws out as conditions for the adhesion of America to the new international code are probably suggested on the ground that they will be unacceptable to the English Government and nation.

The Treaty of Paris precludes any of its signatories from entering into separate negotiations on maritime law, and also from dividing the resolutions which had received, in their collective form, the approbation of all the parties to the Congress. If the question were open, it might be well to consider whether the interest of England is not precisely the same with that of her jealous rival beyond the Atlantic, although, if the conclusion should be in the affirmative, Mr. PIERCE and his Secretary of State would perhaps feel disposed to retract their offer of adhesion. As Mr. MARCY has shown, however, with superfluous ingenuity, that American smartness would easily evade any agreement to suppress privateering, it will hardly be worth the while of the European Governments to repeat their recent proposals. It has been justly remarked in the United States, that, of the four resolutions of Paris, two are nugatory, or at most declaratory of the existing law. Neutral goods under a hostile flag were already exempt from seizure, and it was universally admitted that paper blockades were unjustifiable. Of the remaining enactments, the principle that the flag should henceforward cover the goods was a concession on the part of England; while the abolition of privateering was an obvious gain to the greatest commercial nation.

There is a grave fallacy in the assumption which pervades the American despatch, that privateers at sea may be considered as equivalent to volunteers in the army. Any Government is at liberty to give commissions to its subjects or citizens which entitle them to the benefits, and subject them to the restraints, involved in the laws of war. An enemy can draw no distinction between militiamen and troops of the line, when both are serving in the field; but it is notorious that, as a general rule, privateers never fight. In most instances, their vessels are not adapted to the purpose; and the capitalists who fit them out are too prudent to hunt the wolf, in preference to pouncing on the sheep. Exceptions may occur, in which desperation or gallantry has brought a privateer into action; but the ordinary and avowed purpose of their existence is to prey on the enemy's commerce. If the American Government required and used the services of merchant vessels in warlike operations, the enterprise would assuredly not be carried out at the risk of the private owners. Under a Government commission, however, and maintained at the public expense, the vessels would cease to be privateers, nor would the question of legality arise. What Mr. MARCY really means is, that he objects to the exemption of English commerce from risk, at a time when English cruisers may be covering the ocean in pursuit of American shipping; and it is worth considering whether a mutual release might not be as profitable and convenient as a successful restraint by either party on the goods of the adversary.

In a war with all countries except one, the exemption of private property from seizure would be a great advantage to England. The French navy has sometimes been equal to the English; but English commercial shipping exceeds the mercantile marine of France perhaps tenfold. Four or five years ago, no French merchant ship, with two or three exceptions, measured 1000 tons; but a visit to Blackwall, or to the Liverpool Docks, might almost persuade a careless observer that 1000 tons formed the minimum limit of British trading vessels. If, therefore, a war with France were unhappily to take place, the reapers on both sides would be comparatively equal, but a preponderating portion of the harvest would be furnished by England. In the latter part of the last war between the two countries, there was scarcely any French commerce for English cruisers or privateers to interfere with; but to the end of the struggle, the Channel and Straits of Dover were regarded with well-founded terror by our merchantmen. In the probable event of the greater maritime Power again proving itself superior at sea, French commerce would still be interrupted wherever a blockade could be maintained, while there is no reason to suppose that

any English port could be seriously threatened. If a rich man and a poor man agree to respect one another's property, it is easy to see on which side the advantage of the bargain lies; and if the rich man reserves certain cases in which he may plunder his neighbour without retaliation, he is still more fortunate in his contract. The same considerations which apply to France as compared with England, show still more forcibly the expediency of exempting private property from seizure in the event of a war with any other European Power. The prizes which might be taken from Austria or Prussia would scarcely pay the expense of a single convoy; and Russia from the disadvantageous position of her coast, can, as the late war showed, be at any time effectually blockaded.

If a rupture should take place with America, the plunder offered to the enterprise of cruisers or privateers would be equal on both sides. At the beginning of a struggle, the English navy would be far the stronger; but the capture of merchantmen may easily be effected by extemporized ships of war. The acceptance of Mr. MARCY's proposal would at once dispose of the privateers, and it would leave the English fleet at liberty to blockade the most important of the enemy's ports. The immediate result would be to release London, Liverpool, Hull, and Bristol from all uneasiness, while a complete stoppage of trade might be imposed on New York and New Orleans. The relative advantages would be so entirely on the side of the larger navy that it is difficult to believe that the American Cabinet seriously expected that their proposal would be admitted. Any plan which diminishes the risks of commerce, and confines war to a conflict of regular forces, must be chiefly beneficial to the Power which, with the strongest fleet, possesses the greatest amount of commercial shipping; whilst the political advantage of avoiding all risk of quarrel with neutral States would be a collateral benefit of no trivial importance. If the law in the time of NAPOLEON had been conformable to Mr. MARCY's proposals, English commerce would have benefited relatively far more than the trade of the enemy; and the war with America would in all probability have been avoided. Since that time, the reason for harassing foreign commerce, which was derived from the propriety of protecting native industry, has ceased to influence English policy. The law of blockade would always furnish abundant means for annoying a weaker opponent with impunity.

Mr. MARCY's proposal to exempt goods contraband of war may not impossibly have been designed to render his proposals even more hopelessly unpalatable to England; but in this instance, also, it is a question whether the advantage of the existing system counterbalances the inconvenience of enforcing the actual law. In the last war, the permission to trade in contraband goods would have been almost wholly inoperative; and on coasts where hostile operations were proceeding, it would be, in the majority of instances, frustrated by blockades. The damage inflicted on an enemy by the stoppage of traffic varies according to the circumstances of each separate case. No law prohibits the importation of military stores by land. The presence of our fleet in the Baltic only compelled the enemy to receive supplies through the Prussian territory; and the same resource would be left to any belligerent whose dominions bordered on those of a neutral Power. In practice, it would seldom be found that the restriction had any effect beyond imposing an additional per centage on the price of certain articles; and though the object may be perfectly legitimate, it does not follow that it is worth its cost. The abolition of any pretext for searching a neutral vessel would relieve belligerents from a troublesome duty, founded on an obnoxious right. It may be added that, although the contingency has not occurred for a century, it is possible that, in some future war, English merchants might find themselves interested in an extension of the rights of neutrals.

For the present, it is scarcely probable that any change will take place. The United States have thought it for their interest to abide by the existing law, and consequently they will have the right of issuing letters of marque, while they will be liable to the seizure of their own goods under a neutral flag, when they are at war, as well as to the surrender of merchandize belonging to a belligerent, when they undertake the carrying trade as neutrals. At a future period, however, it is not impossible that all these questions may be set at rest by the exemption of private property from seizure, except in the case of an unsuccessful attempt to break a blockade.

THE SPHERE OF JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.

A WELL-KNOWN passage of the *Wealth of Nations* records the unfavourable opinion which its author had formed of Joint-Stock Companies. The view of the great thinker was like most of his views—very simple. It was that persons who manage their own business care about their own business, but that those who manage the business of others are not very solicitous as to the profits which are to go to others. There seems, at first sight, no contesting the truth of this general dictum on human nature. Yet, as if in defiance of it, the whole history of mercantile enterprise since the days of ADAM SMITH has no more marked and obvious feature than the growth of companies and associations. In his time, they were the rare exception. Perhaps a man could have told on his fingers the number of important commercial companies in the British Islands; and many even of these had been, as it were, seduced into existence by a very questionable monopoly of limited liability. Now, there is scarcely a trade in some branch of which a joint-stock association is not being started. Yet the experience of recent times is not wholly one-sided. Looking a little below the surface, every experienced solicitor can tell you of many companies devised by solicitors, engineers, and speculators, which never existed except upon the Stock Exchange, and which, instead of proceeding to real business, were wound up, in general to the advantage of the respective founders. In a more public sphere, the General Screw Steam Company—a thoroughly *bonâ fide* association, which has owned property of great value, and attempted, not without credit, many important operations—is about, if the report of the directors is sanctioned, to be wound up, avowedly on the ground that the business of ship-owning is one which is not suited to such a company. It is urged that directors, “many of whom are necessarily amateurs, cannot be expected to compete with the practised foresight of a LINDSAY or a DUNBAR.” It may not, therefore, be amiss, especially at the present time, when so many new companies are being suggested, to inquire what is their proper sphere, and what is not?

Recurring to the remark of ADAM SMITH, although the interest of the manager in the success of a Joint-Stock Association is not, of course, so great as that of an individual trader in the success of his own business, yet it cannot be said he has no interest. His credit as a practical man depends on the prosperity of any concern with which he is conspicuously connected. By its success, without being immoderately rich, he may have more influence than many millionaires. A man who has been connected with an abortive company does not improve his position—a person who has been prominent in many is a marked man. Mr. GILBERT is now, and deservedly, a great man in the City of London; but if the London and Westminster Bank had failed, he would have been nobody—if he had continued to pester us with abortive banks, he would have become disreputable. It is impossible to say that a manager will not often gain much by the success of a scheme—will not often incur heavy penalties by its failure. Nor, in fact, is self-interest so entirely the source of mercantile acumen as some people suppose. In almost every old house of business you will find some old and valued clerk who is paid a fixed salary, who has no direct interest in the success of the business, but who, from habit and association, feels every loss to it as a calamity, and every large profit as a good fortune. The desire to succeed in what we are habitually doing is a very important motive in human nature. If, for thirty years, you have been employed to get money for A. B., you will be glad to get money for A. B. The mere success of his scheme is of itself an ambition to the manager of a company. All that is true in ADAM SMITH's remark is, that a man has a stronger interest in his own business than in that in which he is but an agent—that a man who is habitually getting money for himself will be more keen and watchful, than if he were getting it for others. The absence of individual interest in the managers is not a bar to the existence of Joint-Stock Companies. It is only a reason why they will not annihilate the individual traders—why, *cæteris paribus*, he will beat them—why they should confine themselves to pursuits which he cannot or will not attempt.

The great counterbalancing advantage which companies have over individual merchants is, of course, the larger scale on which they can conduct their operations. This is sometimes an advantage, and sometimes not. Mr. BABBAGE, several years ago pointed out that there is in every kind of business a certain plant—a certain number

of machines, engines, instruments, and a certain number of labourers—which is most suitable to that trade, and an extension beyond which will rather diminish than increase the proportionate profit. The addition of a new machine would often enable a manufacturer to increase his supply of goods; but unless he could rely on always keeping it at work, it might not be profitable. Let us illustrate this by the case of ship-owning, to which the Report on the General Screw Company invites our attention. When you have once attained the number of ships which is necessary to enable the owner to be his own insurer, and also to secure an average profit in the shifting freight market, nothing seems to be gained by having more ships. Traders who have fewer are doubtless under a disadvantage. They have to insure their ships, and therefore to pay a profit to the underwriter who incurs the liability, and to the broker who conducts the operation. A shipowner, with a single ship, may even, with the best management, derive no income from her for years. She may always arrive in port at seasons when freights are extremely depressed; and in some of our most important trades, as the East Indian, which employs our most valuable ships, it is often impossible to effect charters except at the port of loading. Bad luck necessarily goes a long way when a ship's annual earnings depend on the chances of a few days. It is necessary to have a considerable number to “eliminate chance,” and secure a regular and average profit. When, however, as has been explained, this limit is reached, there seems no object to be gained by going further. If the honourable member for Tynemouth has attained this limit, no company can secure an advantage over him. If any considerable number of persons can attain that limit, there is no opening for Joint-Stock Companies. Corporations must fail when individuals can succeed.

There are one or two other points which, though of less general and universal importance, still limit the application of the Joint-Stock system. To secure its perfect success, the business should be one that can be managed by rule—one in which you can enact beforehand how it shall be managed, and can discover afterwards whether it has been so managed or not. This is the business of directors and inspectors—the one lays down rules, and the other ascertains whether they have been complied with. There are several branches of trade which hardly admit of this previous definition and recurring scrutiny. The trade of a share-speculator—the trade, it may be observed, of the *Crédit Mobilier*—is of this class. Like a “general merchant,” the speculator selects his article because he believes it will rise. The reasons for his belief are mere probabilities—sometimes of a high, sometimes of a low order. His aim is to play constantly with the chances slightly in his favour, and, in the end, he often thereby gains a large fortune; but if he had to explain the grounds of each speculation to a dozen persons, they would often seem obscure, meagre, and inconclusive. Perhaps no twelve persons would concur in their estimate of such minute chances. If, moreover, the speculator's property were valued on a sudden at particular stages of an operation, the result might often seem bad, though, ultimately, a change of circumstances might prove that the speculator was remarkably right. A business that is managed for others should be one of which the management can be verified by others.

It would seem also that the trade of a Joint-Stock Company should not be dependent on an instinctive knowledge of minute facts. In many markets there are traders whose daily, exclusive, keen attention to their business has given them what seems at first sight a peculiar sense. Their mind is engrained with detail. The analogy of a thousand past cases suggests what the future will be. This can hardly be expected of the manager of a Joint-Stock Company. Mr. JOHN MILL justly remarks that he is in all likelihood abler than the individual trader; but though he is, on that account, more fitted to seize and apprehend what can be gained at once by the distinct grasp of the argumentative reason, he is not at all the more likely—perhaps he is even less likely—to immerse himself so deeply in isolated detail as to acquire a special instinct from the shadowy analogies of half-forgotten facts. A small mind, with an eager self-interest, is most likely to know but one thing, and to remember that thing thoroughly.

Within these limits—when the scale of business is such as to give corporate enterprise an advantage—when its nature admits of being defined and verified—when it can be guided by distinct and producible reasons—experience seems to show that Joint-Stock Companies, managed by able men, and watched over by sensible men, will be eminently successful.

BOLTON IN ENGLAND.

THERE is a village in Northamptonshire called "Wansford in England." A certain rustic, while asleep on a haystack, was washed down the river by a sudden flood, and when he awoke, he inquired, "Where be I?" "At Wansford," was the answer. "What! Wansford in England?" he exclaimed; and Wansford has ever since borne its pleonastic name. In like manner, Bolton might be called "Bolton in England;" for, after the revelations made on a recent trial, it clearly requires some distinguishing appellation. It might be in Ashantee or Borneo, judging from the manners and customs of the natives. Certainly, it deserves a chapter to itself amongst the curiosities of cities. The ladies in Styria, who take arsenic to brighten their eyes and improve their complexions, are nothing to the Bolton matrons, who drug their husbands to death upon high moral and sanitary principles. It is the custom of the country—the characteristic of the town. The manufacturing districts seem to have systematized the art of slow poisoning with a precision unknown since the times of the BORGAS. This fearful crime appears to be endemic as well as cyclical. It reproduces itself, and usually in the same form. It spreads in patches—here and there is a place or time entirely tainted with the *virus*, while whole districts and periods seem free from it.

Perhaps the most curious fact connected with the presence of this infection is the utter paralysis of the moral sense in a whole people which it appears to produce. Here is this business at Bolton, for example. Quite apart from the details of BETSY M'MULLAN'S crime, what a spectacle does the population of that town present! It is the well-known, familiar, recognised practice of the place for women to give their husbands deadly poison under the pleasant and euphemistic name of "quietness." When a man gets drunk, the wife prescribes a remedy, which turns out to be a kill-or-cure one, in the shape of tartarized antimony. Its alleged use is to cure sottishness—its proved effects are to produce the "quietness" of death. This singular domestic custom seems to be as well known in Bolton as the use of tobacco. The medical man alludes to it in the mild jocular style so characteristic of the profession—"You know you ladies do practise sometimes a little on your husbands." The grocer-chemist of the place has his bin or canister of "quietness" ready for the "ladies," in quite as matter-of-course a way as his dips and starch. It is not SIMPSON and his boy HARDMAN alone who ply the trade of the Mantuan apothecary—we gather from the evidence that "quietness" may be had at almost any shop in the town. Nay, more—Bolton quietness has its peculiarities, like Banbury cakes, or Everton toffee. It is, says SIMPSON, "the practice at Bolton" to make up the powders of quietness in packets just five times too strong:—"We make up the nineteen-grain powder in one packet, only cautioning our customers to give only one-fifth of the powder for a dose." Though we infer from this that the custom does not prevail in other towns, we are left in a very disagreeable state of suspicion as to what mode of administering poison may obtain elsewhere among the wives of England. Perhaps, as Edinburgh and London have their different pharmacopœias, so a more potent toxicological formula than even that of Bolton may be in use at Manchester or Leeds. Who knows the relative strength of "quietness?" Is it apportioned to the strength of JASON, or to the fondness of MEDEA? And it is to be remembered that homicide in Bolton is perpetrated under the very holiest auspices. The spirit of BRUTUS is revived—the wives of Bolton kill only because they love. The poisoned cup is but a cooling chalice held by the Temperance Society. Accidentally, a husband may be sent to his grave, but the theory of the thing is that drunkards are to be reformed. In China, it is considered patriotic to strangle female infants—in Polynesia, it is a point of filial piety for children to murder their aged parents. The moral code varies according to degrees of latitude. It is only an ethnological or climatic variety of ethics, which makes husband-murder, on temperance principles, the custom of the country in Lancashire.

BETSY M'MULLAN, according to the verdict of the jury, is not to be regarded as an exception to the merry wives of the factory districts. It has been settled, as far as a verdict can settle such things, that she has not varied from the Bolton practice. She gave the quietness once too often, or once too strong; but she meant no mischief. To be sure, she saturated her husband with antimony till every secretion

reeked with the deadly mineral. Drunk or sober, she made the wretched man swallow the fatal dose. His meat, drink, and medicine were alike seasoned by the loving hand and watchful care of his affectionate partner. She made no secret of her amiable devotion to the cause of temperance and her husband's reformation. She sent the servant girl with the same equanimity and punctuality to fetch the beer from the public-house, and the antimony from the chemist; and with equal deliberation and coolness, she mixed the poison and aired the nightcap. Both matter and manner savoured equally of "quietness." Factory workmen use the drug, we are told, "to clear the cotton dust from their throats," and factory workwomen use it to clear an incumbrance from their beds. BETSY M'MULLAN, with a "Peter" in hand, 100*l.* insurance in prospect, and SIMPSON'S convenient house of call for married ladies in the next street, followed the Bolton use, and is not to be dealt with as a murderess. It is true that she contradicted herself in all sorts of ways, and that she told all manner of lies about the doses which she gave her husband. The perpetual quarrels and blows of this amiable pair are in evidence—an adulterous intercourse, or something very like it, is insinuated against the wife—motive and opportunity are alike proved—the administration of the poison was admitted by her counsel. But Mr. SIMPSON'S shop saves Mrs. M'MULLAN'S neck. There are, it would appear, many other dames in the same boat. We are told that, five or six times a-week, women want the grocer-druggist's assistance for their husbands, and that, at the very moderate figure of only a penny a dose, JOSEPH HARDMAN, aged 19, hands over the familiar sedative.

Making every allowance for the tendency of Mr. SIMPSON'S style of practice to further the great Temperance movement, we must say that, if we are driven to a choice, we prefer drunkenness to poisoning. Of the two, husband-murder is a greater social evil than gin-drinking. It may be an old-fashioned weakness, but we have strong objections to curing sottishness by antimony. How far the Bolton custom prevails, we cannot say; but the revelations at the M'MULLAN trial are not likely to promote the comfort of the domestic hearth. If it is the practice of Lancashire women to give "caulkers"—as the poor victim expressed it—of this sort to their husbands, the sooner the facilities which the SIMPSONS offer to their female customers are curtailed, the better. If the evidence is a libel on Bolton wives, we can only regret the injustice which is done to them. Large social suspicions are at least suggested. Every drunken husband, with the morning qualms of conscience or of stomach, will henceforth accuse his wife, rightly or wrongly, of undue familiarity with the mysteries of tartarized antimony and "quietness." These domestic difficulties can only be obviated by abridging the present facilities for purchasing poison. It is only too plain, as the Reports on Adulteration prove, that there is no guarantee for the public safety in the feelings of responsibility which exist in the retail tradesman. For a single penny, SIMPSON, in the ordinary way of business, sells enough poison to kill a man. The Legislature must interfere to protect us against the fatal incitements to murder which are offered by tradesmen who vend quietness and death without asking questions.

COLLIERY ACCIDENTS.

THE first impression of any one who ventures into a coal-pit, after he has got over the unpleasant feeling produced by the seemingly interminable descent, is amazement that men can be found to pursue their daily toil under such horrible and unwholesome conditions. The gloom of the abyss is feebly lighted up by the flicker of a Davy lamp. The atmosphere is a pestilent mixture of sulphur, hydrogen, and carbonic acid, which untrained lungs almost refuse to breathe. The road through the mine is deep in foul slush; and in the advanced headings, miners are at work upon their backs picking away at the sides of the prison in which they are confined. It is, of course, only the irresistible force of habit that can reconcile men to toil under conditions which not only deprive life of all its beauty, but shorten it to about one-half of its natural duration. Then there is always a spot pointed out as the place where a frightful accident originated. The details are almost always the same. An ignorant workman preferred the light of a naked candle to the faint illumination of a safety-lamp. The overmen had neglected to warn him that the working was fiery. The manager had allowed the ventilation to become so defective as to suffer the explosive

gases to accumulate to a dangerous extent. The result was, that the reckless miner, with hundreds of his fellow-workmen, were burnt, stifled, and buried, some eighty fathoms below the surface of the earth. The same explanation which accounts for the existence of a mining population accounts also for the carelessness with which they seem to court accident and death. Habit not only inures them to the normal and unavoidable horrors of their life, but dulls their perception of the risks to which their own recklessness exposes them.

It is the same in every hazardous occupation. The sailor incurs needless danger, with full faith in the cherub that sits up aloft and takes care of the life of poor Jack—the soldier thrusts his head above the trench as a mark to the enemy, in happy confidence that every bullet has its billet. Wherever daily risks are run, there is a kind of fatalism, which, it is true, adds immeasurably to the danger, but without which the perilous employment could not be endured, and would never be undertaken. No man can be brought to guard against the perils with which he is familiar. None of us are free from the influence of this principle, even in the small hazards to which ordinary existence on the surface of the earth is exposed. Who ever takes any precaution against a railway accident? We once knew an old gentleman who never would enter a railway train unless he could secure the middle seat of the middle compartment of the centre carriage; but, as a rule, we all take our places without much regard to the consequences which may ensue in the event of a collision. The greater or less probability of a fatal result has very little to do with men's conduct, and the miner encounters the fearful perils to which he is accustomed with the same carelessness which we all exhibit in regard to the smaller dangers of daily life. There is little chance of our being able to change this feeling; and, indeed, if it were once replaced by what is ordinarily considered a reasonable amount of caution, the consequence would probably be that the hardy race of men who devote themselves to hazardous subterranean employments would gradually cease to exist, and leave us without the indispensable material which their labour wins from the bowels of the earth.

And yet something ought to be done to stay the frightful loss of life which annually occurs in colliery workings. In every twenty years of peace, as many Englishmen are sacrificed by avoidable accidents in mines as fell in the recent struggle against Russia. The causes of such accidents are perfectly well understood; and, by the admission of the owners and managers of mines, they are almost entirely removable by the use of reasonable precautions. Let us confine ourselves for the present to the most destructive class of accidents—namely, those arising from explosions. It is established by the inquiries of Parliamentary Committees, and by the resolutions of the large body of coal-owners who met to discuss the subject a year or two ago—and it has since been recognised by the Legislature—that it is possible so to ventilate a pit as to dilute and render harmless all the noxious gases which it may produce. Sudden outbreaks of inflammable gas, known in mining language as blowers and bags of gas, are the only risks against which efficient ventilation cannot entirely guard; and even these may be removed by the constant use of the safety-lamp in all "fiery mines." With a sufficient supply of air, an effective superintendence to guard against any interruption of the current, and reasonable care in avoiding the use of naked lights, the terrible calamity of an explosion, instead of being a matter of constant occurrence, would not, perhaps, happen once in a century.

Surely there must be some way of enforcing a due regard to these obvious precautions. Education, it is said, has done something, and promises to do more, in instilling the duty of caution into the minds of the working men. We do not, however, anticipate any large benefit from this source. The education of their daily lives will create a habit of recklessness which no scientific teaching can altogether eradicate. But men who cannot be taught prudence out of consideration for their own safety may nevertheless be influenced by the apparently less powerful check of a system of fines and other punishments. Such a system actually exists in law, though in fact it is almost nugatory. The late inquest in South Wales, like almost every other similar inquiry, disclosed fatal breaches of regulations, continued day after day without bringing down any punishment on the offenders. The more important sources of danger which arise from the defective arrangements and careless superintendence of owners, managers, overmen, and firemen, can, we believe, be effectually closed by adequate legislative enactments. By the Act

passed in 1855, for the better regulation of coal-mines, an owner or manager who neglects the precautions necessary for the safety of his men is liable only to a paltry fine of 5*l.*, with a further daily penalty in case he should neglect the express injunctions of the Government Inspector; but the duties of that functionary are so extensive as to prevent him from visiting a mine, on the average, more than once in about three years, so that his supervision is almost nominal. Such provisions are worse than absurd. An owner of mines which bring him in thousands per annum, who saves, by a niggardly system of ventilation, a hundred times the utmost penalty which the law, if rigorously enforced, could inflict, is not likely to be much influenced by the dread of incurring a trivial fine, such as might be inflicted on one of his colliers for punching the head of a fellow-workman. No fines will have any effect upon those who have the chief control of a mine, unless they are sufficient to outweigh the pecuniary advantages of setting the law at defiance; and it would be far better to rely on public opinion alone to keep coal-owners alive to their heavy responsibilities than to trust to punishments so ridiculously inadequate as those provided by the existing Act.

It is true that an occasional verdict of manslaughter, like that recently found in Wales, serves to check the negligence and rashness of the officers entrusted with the care of a mine; but it is not in one case out of a hundred that the calamity can be brought home to particular individuals. Almost invariably the fatal result ensues from a complicated system of mal-administration. The defective arrangements of owners lay the train to which the carelessness of the victims themselves sets fire; and juries are rarely able to divide the responsibility with sufficient accuracy to induce them to find a verdict of manslaughter, as they did in the late exceptional case in South Wales. The inquest at Oldbury, for example, on an accident in which eleven lives had been lost in consequence of the ventilating furnace having been allowed to go out, in spite of the statutory injunction to keep up a sufficient ventilation, resulted in a verdict of accidental death; and this is the ordinary course of mining inquests. The only possible security against such calamities seems to be the infliction of a severe penalty on the owners and managers of mines for any neglect of proper precautions. By firmly enforcing the law against the miners themselves, some additional safeguards may be obtained; but this can only be done with the aid of their employers, to whom alone their offences can be generally known. Mining capitalists are men of education, who can be made to comprehend duties which it is difficult to instil into the minds of ignorant colliers. To be effectual, the law must strike at the responsible heads; and we see no reason why it should not be made penal for them to allow a collier, who has to their knowledge been guilty of a breach of rules, to escape the penalty awarded by law to his offence.

If employers were thus compelled to enforce the law against their workmen, and were themselves subjected to something more than nominal penalties for neglecting their own more important duties, we are satisfied that the natural recklessness of the miners, and the heedless or niggardly omissions of those who live upon their dangers, would be enormously diminished. This, at least, is certain—that almost all the explosions which occur are preventable, and that it is mainly the fault of the proprietors of collieries that they are not prevented. Under such circumstances, the public are entitled to require that the frightful destruction of life which is annually permitted should be stopped by the application of adequate legislative pressure to the only persons on whom it can be effectively brought to bear—namely, those who reap the profits which are earned by the annual sacrifice of a thousand lives.

THE PUBLICITY OF PRIVATE LIFE.

IT appears to be one of the drawbacks of a Republican state of society, that, where it exists, the sanctity of private life is continually invaded. Perhaps as such a society grows older, it may shake off this evil, which even its friends must admit disfigures it during its immaturity. But certainly, in the America of the present day, private individuals are brought before the public in a manner which seems intolerable to the inhabitants of Europe. Mr. Dickens has sketched, with his usual vigour, the receptions and deputations which awaited Martin Chuzzlewit at each stage of his progress to the swamp of Eden; and every traveller that returns to the old country is full of stories illustrating what has seemed to him the impertinent curiosity of his Transatlantic acquaintance. So minutely does one neighbour scan the affairs of another, and so great is the jealousy of any-

thing like predomance, that it is said that even those who have secured or inherited a sufficient fortune to rival the independent position of an English landed proprietor are afraid to retire on their means, and shelter themselves, in the continued prosecution of commerce, against the envy and dislike which would await the creation of a Squirearchy. We are very far in England from such a state of things as this; but it must be confessed that we are not without an approach to it. The symptoms are slight, because we are well guarded against any malignant form of the disease by the possession of an opulent and educated aristocracy. However dearly we may occasionally have to pay for our aristocratic Government, we cannot doubt that its existence raises the standard of English manners; and if there is one thing more than another to which the feelings of an aristocratic society are opposed, it is to the dragging private persons into public notice. Both on its bad and its good side, an aristocracy fights against this. Its very errors of exclusiveness and *hauteur* prevent it from lightly accepting individual claims to notoriety; and its nobler sentiments of pride and generosity teach it that a man who respects himself wishes to walk through the world at a certain distance from other men. This spirit has penetrated so deeply into English life that it is not easy for the folly of a few individuals who do not share it to impair it materially. But there are one or two ways in which the barrier which should divide public from private life is sometimes threatened with attack; and as a tendency to do our neighbours a slight and unrecognised wrong is one which grows every time it is gratified, we may be wise in taking precautions against it betimes.

One symptom which deserves some notice is an increasing habit of paying honour to persons of the least possible celebrity. Some one who ought to live and die in respectable obscurity is always being stuck up on a pedestal for the admiration of the multitude. We are at the mercy, in this matter, of a set of good-natured, idle busybodies, who, having nothing else to do, amuse themselves with finding some object of possible distinction, and insisting on all their acquaintances uniting in a tribute of respect. There is in every neighbourhood some half-pay captain, or young gentleman fresh from college, or curate with an independence, or some other well-meaning, unemployd person, who delights in this sort of work, and in writing himself "Honorary Secretary." Events must necessarily occur that furnish food for the ebullitions of benevolent vanity. There is no hope of escaping the infliction by any lack of material. The vicar goes to a better living—the brewer dies richer than was expected—the chairman of the Sessions is incapacitated for future service. The busybodies seize on the occasion like vultures on a carcass. Out comes a prospectus. "Feeling that all will unite most cordially, &c. &c., the following gentlemen have kindly consented to act as a committee;" and then we are asked for our guinea. We have no wish to give it—not, we will suppose, from any wish to save it, but because we do not recognise the call. Everything has but gone on as it ought to do in a respectable society. The vicar has done pretty well, and he has got his reward; the brewer's widow will have all the consolation that the most expensive mourning can bestow; the magistrate has sentenced a good many poachers in his time, and we knew he must stop some day or other. Why should any of these natural breaks in human life cost us a guinea? But it requires some nerve to refuse. Every one that we know will know that we do not give. The relations of the subject of honour will be especially keen in noting our backwardness. A comparison will be made between us and more willing neighbours, and reasons of ill-will or niggardliness will be imputed to us, and so we yield against our better judgment.

When the call on our purse is based on our forming part of a special society or institution, it is often equally unwarranted, and is still harder, if possible, to escape from. We remember to have heard of a society composed of persons of very different ages. It so happened that one of the officers of the institution died in the prime of life. He was an excellent, an accomplished, and a zealous man; but he was only one of many like him. However, he died before his friends were prepared to lose him; and so a painted window was to be erected to his memory. In a small institution this is a signal and an expensive honour, and ought scarcely to be granted because a man dies before he has reached old age. Soon afterwards, another official died under somewhat similar circumstances. Subscriptions were immediately started for another painted window. The society had got into a wrong track. Instead of leaving those who felt sorrow for a private man to indulge it in private, they thought a public honour an appropriate compensation for a premature death. Every one who had ever belonged to the society was called upon to subscribe, and it was some time before the return of common sense at last taught the rulers of opinion in the institution to pause. But the honorary secretaries do not always wait till death has invested the obscure departed with a vague halo of glory. They have invented the system of subscriptions for portraits of the living. A man against whose character nothing is known, and who has pleasant and amiable manners, is appointed to one of the numberless offices of civil life. His friends congratulate him, and think that there is an end of the matter. But some noodle is struck with the fatal idea of getting the official painted. Round come the orders for a guinea. We do not like to have our names omitted from a list which we know the official's wife will nar-

rowly examine, and by which we conjecture that she will regulate her future behaviour to us. We grumble, but we comply; and in return, we have the pleasure of seeing a full-length portrait of our official disgrace the walls of the Exhibition, and of receiving, in course of time, a miserable lithograph, which we hang, if we dare, in a back bedroom.

The worst of paying public honour to the little men is that it dulls the zest with which we render our tribute of gratitude and respect to the great. We should keep our guinea to do homage to a benefactor of his kind or his country, and not squander it on perpetuating the memory of a beadle. There can hardly be a pleasure more pure and more ennobling than that with which we contribute to a memorial to such men as Sir Robert Peel or the Duke of Wellington. It makes us feel that we are citizens of a great country. We may go a step lower, and yet the pleasure will be keen and the honour richly deserved. A memorial is fitly raised by penny subscriptions to Mr. Hume, and all Englishmen are glad, from time to time, to see a picture of any distinguished Parliamentary worthy, or military or naval hero. Then, again, public institutions should take care to possess some token by which those who have conferred lasting celebrity on their body—who have earned an indisputable, a European reputation—should be associated with them. Christchurch should possess a portrait of Dean Gaisford—Trinity one of Mr. Macaulay—the College of Surgeons one of Sir Astley Cooper. Occasionally, though rarely, persons have done so much for particular localities that those localities ought not to be allowed to forget them. Personal friends may, of course, naturally wish to erect some memorial, or offer some joint gift, to a man they love. Let them understand that this is a purely private affair—that only intimate friends should be invited to join—that none but a public man can have claims on more than a small circle. When any one is pestered with an application to contribute to one of these memorial-funds, let him ask himself these two plain questions:—Was I an intimate personal friend of the deceased, and is the subscription asked of me in that capacity? Or, if not, was the deceased a man who played a public part and did a public good? If both replies are in the negative, let him send a polite refusal.

There is another invasion of private life which is characterized, not by paying too much respect, but by paying too little. A large number of persons seem to think that eminent literary men have no private life, or, if they have, that it is a usurpation, and ought to be put down. Purveyors of literary anecdotes consider themselves perfectly justified in obtaining surreptitiously, and recording minutely, the most trifling details of the domestic economy of men illustrious as writers. Poets appear to be singled out as especial victims. We learn from *Southey's Letters* that he one day received a letter informing him that a legacy had been left him. On his sending in reply a request for further particulars, he met with an obstinate silence, and subsequently learnt that the whole story of the legacy was a laborious and cruel hoax, devised for the purpose of obtaining the poet's autograph. The gross impertinence and affront were not to be considered for a moment. Southey was fair game—he had made his name known by writing verses. There is no end to the familiarity which it is thought decorous to exhibit when a poet is the victim. Sometimes an introduction is obtained, and then every circumstance of the interview, which the unfortunate poet cannot refuse, is chronicled. Five minutes' conversation entitles the stranger to speak as if he had been a bosom friend of the poet from his youth up. The book of reminiscences is published. A chapter catches the eye with a large-letter heading, "Visit to the Laureate." It is found to contain a heap of the most trifling details, some true and some not, but not one of which the public has a right to know. "The Laureate rises at half-past eight." "Our great idyllist has a favourite bantam." "The author of *Maud* greeted affably a poor washerwoman." What right has any one to print such small matters, and to rob a gentleman of his privacy? We ought to be ashamed of ourselves if we read the trash; but scarcely any snobbishness can equal that of writing it. And yet it is written every day; and in America it would not only be written, but the writer would look on himself as robbed and defrauded if he were not allowed to supply the market with such materials. When a man has long been dead, it is allowable to collect all the small traits of his character and habits which show us what he really was. In order to understand him at all, we must see him as he appeared to his chosen friends. But no one is at liberty to annoy a living man; and it must annoy any one to find his privacy invaded by prying gossip-mongers.

Mr. Gillfillan, to take one instance, is a notorious offender in this line. He has lately published a book called the *History of a Man*, in which he favours the world with his religious views, and repeatedly expresses his dissent from the doctrines of "Thomas Carlyle." Why "Thomas Carlyle"? Why should a man be called by his Christian name in a printed book because he has written a *History of the French Revolution*? There is something insufferable in the vulgarity of this impudence. Unless Mr. Carlyle is more indulgent of "Windbags" in private than in public, we may guess the degree of his intimacy with Mr. Gillfillan. Even his choicest friend would never think of speaking of him to strangers as "Thomas." Why, then, should a common acquaintance presume to drop the courtesy due to a gentleman in mentioning his name, simply because Mr. Carlyle has written a great many good books? A man who does this will do worse things.

Let any reader open Mr. Gilfillan's book at a chapter headed "Public and Literary Life," and he will see the lengths to which impertinence can be carried. Mr. Gilfillan takes upon himself to describe the various styles in which eminent writers of the present day converse. He tells us that "Bailey of *Festus* is a delightful person, modest, reserved, yet far from proud"—that "Archibald Alison (whose literary position enables Mr. Gilfillan to dispense with any notice of his baronetcy) is cold, still, and silent as an iceberg"—that Professor Blackie is bold, rattling, fearless, and careless. What business has Mr. Gilfillan or any one else to print such things of any living man? To do so is as coarse an infringement of the laws of decent society as if he were to go round treading on these gentlemen's toes. Society ought to take up their quarrel, and exclude from its pale a writer who does not know how to respect the privacy of his neighbours. This seems to us the true and only remedy. This sort of miserable gossip does undoubtedly help to sell a book, and therefore there will always be found persons to provide it unless a penalty can be devised sufficient to deter them. If the publication is anonymous, the offender must escape, but the name is generally given as some small guarantee that the statements are authentic. In that case, society has the remedy in its hands. It can tell the delinquent that he has abused the opportunity which his admission into the company of gentlemen has given him—that he has been guilty of a low, underbred action, and that it must protect its worthier members against such intrusion for the future. The abuse would soon cease if it were known that any one would be treated as a snob who presumed to print stories and remarks about "Thomas Carlyle" and "Alfred Tennyson." And society is bound to effect this, not only for the sake of men from whom it has received so many benefits, but also that it may guard, in this and every other way, against private life being made too public.

MALLEABLE IRON.

WHEN it was announced, at the late meeting of the British Association, that a paper would be read on a new method of converting cast into malleable iron without the use of fuel, the intelligence was received by many with a smile of incredulity, and not a few "practical men" went to the meeting of Section G, expecting to be entertained by the visionary schemes of some ingenious but idle enthusiast. Their expectations were utterly falsified. Conviction was forced upon minds from which no ready assent could have been hoped; a great invention was lucidly and unostentatiously propounded; and men who went prepared for an exhibition of temerity, if not of folly, remained to express their concurrence in the graceful tribute of admiration paid by Mr. Nasmyth to one of the greatest discoveries of the age. Every one felt, after hearing Mr. Bessemer's paper, that, if any reliance could be placed upon the facts stated to the Association, a new era was at hand in all those numerous and important branches of manufacturing industry which concern the working of wrought iron or steel. Without further reference to the paper communicated to the Association, we will now describe what we have seen at Mr. Bessemer's premises at Baxter House, leaving our readers to say whether we have overstated the importance of the subject.

It is necessary to premise that common cast iron contains somewhere about 4 or 5 per cent. of carbon, as well as a variable quantity of silicium and other earthy bases, phosphorus and sulphur. The object of every process for making malleable iron is the separation and removal of these foreign substances. The best malleable iron contains about one-half per cent. of carbon; but the process of extraction is difficult and expensive. The fusibility of iron depends upon the quantity of carbon present; and no commercially available method has till now been discovered by which iron, after parting with a very large proportion of its carbon, can be brought to remain in a state more nearly approaching fusion than that of a pasty mass. Steel is produced from iron from which the carbon and other impurities have been extracted, by a tedious and costly process, the object of which is the restoration of a portion of the carbon which previous processes have removed. Steel contains, according to the purposes for which it is wanted, from rather more than one-half per cent. to rather less than 2 per cent. of carbon. Malleable iron—or iron comparatively free from carbon—is usually produced, in this country, in the following manner:—

The melted iron, as extracted from the ore in the smelting or blast furnace, is run out into bars a few feet in length, technically termed *pigs*. These pigs, when cold, are removed from the sand-moulds into which they were run, and transferred to a second furnace, called the "fining furnace," where they are again reduced to a state of fusion; and finally, the mass thus produced is placed in a third furnace, where it undergoes the process of puddling. Omitting all matters of detail, the essential part of this operation is the reduction of the iron to a pasty mass, which is stirred and rolled about by the workman until a large ball, or "bloom," of iron, weighing from sixty to seventy pounds, is conglomerated at the end of the rod with which he works, and is judged to be in a fit state for the final process. It is then withdrawn from the fire, and taken to a "tilting hammer" and a pair of squeezers, or to a Nasmyth's steam forge, where it is subjected to very heavy pressure, and a quantity of melted slag and refuse, mixed with the puddled iron, squeezed out. For the purpose of our present

comparison we need follow the process no further. Other methods of producing malleable iron directly from the ore are in use in various parts of the Continent; but they are extremely expensive, require a rich ore and a very pure fuel, are only applicable upon a small scale, and sacrifice a very large percentage—in some cases from forty to fifty per cent.—of the metal.

Of all our more important mechanical operations, perhaps puddling is the most imperfect and unsatisfactory. It is very expensive, both from the quantity of fuel consumed (which is about equal to the weight of metal treated), and the severe nature of the labour required. During the recent hot weather, it was found necessary to stop nearly all the Staffordshire puddling furnaces—two men having fallen dead at their work. The result is the production of an iron so far from being chemically pure that it is astonishing how much we have been able to effect with so imperfect a material. From the immense demand for iron which has prevailed for some years past, and the stimulus that has thus been given to the production of increased quantity, the quality has very seriously deteriorated. The difficulty experienced by the Government, during the late war, in procuring iron of a quality suitable for the purposes of warfare, is too well known to need more than a passing reference.

Mr. Bessemer's experiments have been conducted upon the pig-iron. He proposes that, for the purposes of manufacture, the smelted iron, as it leaves the blast furnace, shall be run immediately into the converting vessel presently to be described; but, for the purposes of experiment, it has been more convenient to melt down pig-iron, as the metal is much sooner reduced to a state of fusion. The experiment, therefore, takes up the process at the point at which the metal is ordinarily placed in the fining furnace. It must be remembered, however, that one important end answered by his invention is, to do away with the consumption of fuel required for this intermediate process. The "converting vessel," where the change of the melted metal from ordinary cast iron to malleable iron or steel is to take place, consists, externally, of a cylinder of iron, surrounded, near the bottom, by a hollow ring—an annular pipe, in fact—of the same metal, communicating with five small "tuyere" pipes, placed at equal distances round the cylinder. These pipes are carried through the outer and inner structure of the vessel, and each of them enters the chamber within, near the junction of the side with the floor, by an aperture about three-eighths of an inch in diameter, protected by a coating of the best fire-clay. The external cylinder is lined with a thick lining of fire-brick, and the internal structure consists of two chambers, or stories, communicating by a small cylindrical opening in the centre. The lower chamber, into which the melted iron is introduced, is a simple cylinder—the upper chamber has a floor inversely arched, so that any melted metal forced up through the opening from the lower chamber may trickle back again, and the roof is in the shape of a cupola or dome. Two apertures, a few inches square, placed opposite to each other between the floor and the top of this chamber, communicate with the external air. A powerful blast, worked by a small engine, can be let into the hollow ring which girds the outer cylinder, and thence, of course, enters the lower chamber through the tuyere pipes. A hole at the bottom of the chamber, secured in the usual manner, furnishes the means of tapping the vessel, and running off the produce into the moulds prepared for it.

When everything is ready for the operations to commence, the blast is set on to blow into the converting vessel—the melting furnace is tapped—and the melted iron, of the usual deep orange tint, pours slowly down the channel into the lower chamber of the converting vessel, through an aperture which is then closed up and luted. The pressure of the blast is about 9 or 10 lbs. to the square inch—strong enough to force the air completely through the superincumbent mass of fused iron, and out through the apertures near the top of the vessel. As the action is continued, every particle of the melted metal is brought in turn into contact with a stream of air. To use the language of chemistry, an energetic combination takes place between the oxygen of the air pumped in and the carbon mixed with the iron. In popular language, fire, instead of being supplied externally round and about the mass of iron, is kindled and sustained throughout every particle of the liquid metal. A heat is thus generated, vastly greater than that which can be supplied by mere external combustion. What is taking place is indicated by the tongues of flame which, in two or three minutes, begin to shoot forth from the apertures in the vessel, and which gradually increase in body and in intensity until the whole mass is in a state of agitation, almost like boiling water—the difference being, however, that the agitation is caused by the external force of the air blown rapidly and continuously through the liquid iron, not by the conversion of the substance itself into an expandable vapour, as in the case of genuine ebullition. However, this state may very fairly be called "the boil," and it is indicated by the blowing out, through the apertures, of large quantities of melted slag—the refuse which is squeezed out of the puddler's bloom under the action of immense pressure, but which is here driven off simply by the action of the blast, because, being much lighter than the iron, it rises to the top, like scum upon the surface of water, now that the metal is in a state of perfect fluidity. It is supposed that at this period a very important change begins to take place, and that that part of the carbon which is in a state, not of mechanical mixture, but of chemical combination with the iron

is now compelled, by the agency of the increasing heat, to part from the metal, and yield itself a captive to the superior affinity of the oxygen. This "boil" takes place from fifteen to twenty or twenty-five minutes after the commencement of the process, and continues with more or less violence till all the carbon is burnt out. The moment that this is effected, and that no more carbon, or only a very small quantity, remains, the metal must be run out—otherwise, the action of the air would cool the metal, and make it set hard with great rapidity. It may be run out into moulds of any size or shape; but the most advantageous form is that of a deep and narrow mould, as then the slag which has not been already removed, and which comes last out of the hole at the bottom of the converting vessel, lies in a thin cake at the top of the casting, and is easily taken off by a pair of shears.

It will be obvious that one principal feature in the process is, that the operator deals with the metal in a state of perfect fluidity—a desideratum hitherto unattainable with iron containing only a small quantity of carbon. Hence, it can not merely be procured in masses of any size (whereas the puddler can only produce 60 or 70 lbs. in a lump), but it will possess the distinguishing character of all fluids—it will be perfectly homogeneous. The texture, composition, and quality will be the same throughout every part of the mass. That the fluidity is really greatly increased, notwithstanding the subtraction of the carbon, is shown by the fact that it is found desirable to diminish the power of the blast from 9 or 10 lbs. to about 5 lbs. during the latter part of the process, as well as by the rapidity with which the metal runs out of the furnace, and its brilliant whiteness. It is impossible to overrate the advantage of having a really homogeneous product. In large masses of malleable iron, procured in the ordinary way by welding together a number of the puddler's blooms, there often occur small knobs and fragments of metal much harder than the rest; and many manufacturers consider soft malleable iron quite as trying to their tools as hard steel, from the unexpected increase of resistance suddenly offered by particular parts of the mass, and the consequent unequal strain upon different portions of the machinery. The greater the mass required, the greater the difficulty of obtaining a metal upon all parts of which equal reliance can be placed; and hence, where a very heavy strain, in a direction different from that of the fibre, is expected, strength is often obliged to be sought in an enormous thickness of material. The prodigious weight of anchors is rendered necessary by the impossibility of calculating accurately the strength of the metal in any particular part, so that the size of the whole must be increased to meet the chance of a bad piece of metal occurring here and there. One of Mr. Bessemer's numerous patents is for the application of his invention to the construction of anchors, in which he hopes to attain equal strength with a greatly diminished weight.

It is hardly necessary to point out the enormous saving in labour and fuel effected by the new process, especially in the manufacture of steel. Mr. Bessemer believes that steel, such as is now worth from 50*l.* to 60*l.* a ton, may be produced at a cost to the manufacturer of less than 10*l.* a ton. In the manufacture of malleable iron, also, the saving will be very great, though less than in the case of steel. Indeed, one of the results of the invention will be the curious anomaly that steel will be produced at a little less risk, and therefore at a little less cost, than malleable iron; for it is obvious that, by tapping the furnace *before* the complete combustion of the carbon has taken place, steel will be produced instead of iron. Practice and experience will, no doubt, in time enable the workman so to regulate the operation as to produce to a nicety any particular quality of iron or steel required; but until this practical knowledge has been gained, there will be some difficulty in calculating the exact length of time to be occupied in the conversion. If, therefore, the process should be continued a little too long for steel, malleable iron will be obtained—if it be continued a little too long for malleable iron, the metal will be set in the furnace. "The boil" appears to be the critical period. Whatever be the time occupied in arriving at "the boil," it is found that from twelve to fifteen minutes are requisite to produce malleable iron, and from seven to twelve minutes to produce the different qualities of steel.

How effectually the carbon can be removed is shown by an analysis of a chance specimen of Mr. Bessemer's malleable iron, made by Dr. Henry, who, we believe, was strongly inclined to doubt whether the process could really be so successful as it was stated to be. He found the quantity of carbon present to be less than $\frac{1}{30}$ th per cent.—or less than $\frac{1}{3000}$ th part of the weight of the metal. Of silica, a trace merely was found. By the application of means already well understood, the sulphur and phosphorus will be as completely removed. A considerable portion of both is driven off without the use of any means for that special object; and by treating the melted metal with proper substances, these impurities will be withdrawn. The difficulty which Mr. Bessemer has applied himself to solve, and which he has solved, is the complete separation of carbon and the earthy bases. Apart from the cheapness and facility of his process, he has been able successfully to grapple with the half per cent. of carbon which puddling can never get rid of.

The process, as described above, is open to a serious objection. The blast must be kept up to the last, or the melted metal would run into the tuyeres, and spoil the blast apparatus. Hence the air is being driven through the metal up to the very moment

that it ceases to run out of the vessel; and the ingots produced are consequently very porous, and full of air-bubbles. With malleable iron, this is of no importance, as it would always be rolled while in a state not far from fusion, and the air would be completely squeezed out, as the slag is squeezed out of the puddled ball. But cast steel would be useless if porous—a difficulty which is met by an ingenious modification of the converting vessel. It is slung horizontally at the end of two cranks, which, by means of a counterbalancing weight, can easily be turned through any angle. The blast is admitted by a pipe passing through the axle of one of the cranks, and thus revolving with the converting vessel. The tuyeres enter the converting vessel by a series of apertures forming a horizontal row. The cylinder can thus be made to revolve round the axis of the crank without turning upon any axis of its own; and thus the apertures of the tuyeres may be raised till they are brought above the surface of the metal. The blast can then be turned off, and the agitation of the metal allowed to subside. Iron melted by existing processes sets in about three or four minutes; but Mr. Bessemer finds that he can allow it to stand for ten or twelve minutes—a period quite sufficient to allow all the air-bubbles to escape—and the cylinder may then be raised still further, and the metal poured off as gently as may be requisite, through a spout at the top or in the side of the vessel. The quality of the steel produced admits of no doubt. A fragment broken off from an ingot cast when we saw the experiment, was compared with a fragment broken off from the end of a file. It was harder, and far finer in the grain.

The experiment in question was conducted with six or seven hundredweight of Yorkshire iron of a common quality. An ingot of six hundredweight was produced in one piece in about twenty-five minutes. There will be no difficulty in producing masses of any size or shape. The size of the converting-vessel and the number of tuyeres may be increased to any requisite extent. The blast need not be increased in strength, as it will only be necessary to enlarge the area of the floor of the vessel, so that the iron may not rise to a height of more than eight or nine inches. The loss was about 13 per cent.; but of this a considerable quantity might be recovered, as the slag blown out during the boil contains about 50 per cent. of iron, in the shape of little globules, like shot, set in the slag. It is extremely porous, and crumbles to the touch, so that it might be broken up, and the iron separated by washing, with little difficulty or labour. In the ordinary puddling process, from 17 to 25 per cent. is lost, and in the Catalan and Corsican processes, not only is a weight of charcoal consumed, from three to seven times that of the iron produced, but 5-13ths, or about 38 per cent., of the metal is sacrificed to secure the purity of the remainder.

Mr. Nasmyth tried some years ago to decarburize cast iron by blowing steam into the melted metal. This attempt failed, as the separation of the oxygen from the steam exhausted so much of the heat of the metal that the heat evolved in the combination of the oxygen with the carbon in the iron was insufficient to compensate the waste; and the iron was cooled instead of being heated. With the freedom from jealousy which marks a truly great mind, Mr. Nasmyth paid, as we have said, at the late meeting at Cheltenham, a graceful tribute to the importance of the invention, and spoke in terms no less honourable to himself than to Mr. Bessemer, of the ingenuity of the process and the vastness of the results to which it would unquestionably lead. Mr. Bessemer, on the other hand, derives from the experience of Mr. Nasmyth the important knowledge that, by the joint use of jets of steam and blasts of air, he will be able to regulate with the utmost nicety the amount of heat generated, and the rapidity of the process.

The history of this invention is curious. Some two years ago, Mr. Bessemer's attention was attracted to a subject happily now of less pressing interest than it then was—namely, the manufacture of rifled cannon. The object of rifling muskets and cannon is to secure a control over the direction of that rotation which is part of the motion of every projectile, and to insure that it shall take place round an axis coincident with the direction of the missile. For this purpose, with the Minié musket and the Lancaster gun, an elongated ball is used, and the interior of the projecting tube is cut with a curved groove or grooves. When a leaden ball is shot, no appreciable injury is caused to the barrel of the gun, but when an iron ball is used, as in the case of cannon, the wear and tear is very great indeed. The Lancaster guns are seriously injured, if not rendered unserviceable, after a very few hundred rounds. It occurred to Mr. Bessemer that the object might be attained, without rifling the cannon, by using an elongated ball, with a hole drilled half-way down its longer axis, and prolonged into two channels opening by a curved arm upon each side of the ball. The effect of the air passing through these bent pipes and out at the back of the ball, as it flew through the air, would be to create a motion of rotation round the longer axis of the ball, just as, in an emission steam-engine, a rotation is created by the backward pressure of steam issuing from a bent pipe. Finding difficulties in the way of testing the invention in England, and availing himself of certain circumstances into which it is not necessary to enter, he applied to the Emperor of the French, who instantly placed the resources of the arsenal at Vincennes at his disposal, and afforded him every facility for his experiments. The balls were found to rotate as expected—a fact which was

proved by causing a small projection to spring out of the side of the ball the moment it left the mouth of the cannon, and observing the position in which this cut targets of thin board placed at intervals in the flight of the ball; but it was also found that the cannon could not safely carry the increased weight of metal rendered necessary by the elongation of the ball. Hence, Mr. Bessemer was led to make experiments on the production of a tougher metal for cannon. He tried numerous mixtures of various kinds of fusible metal, until at last he began to consider whether it might not be practicable to produce malleable iron in a state in which it would be easier to mould it to the required form than by the expensive process of forging. The result of his experiments has been the discovery of a process applicable to the arts of peace no less than to those of war.

It is difficult to assign any limits to the importance of an invention whose influence will be felt throughout the civilized world in the improved quality and diminished cost of one of the great staples of modern industry. The first axiom of the iron trade is demonstrated to be a fallacy; and, to a mind familiar with the subject, the magnitude of the change cannot be more emphatically expressed than in the simple proposition that the ancient and fundamental antagonism between the terms cast iron and malleable iron has ceased to exist; for malleable iron will now always be cast. It is impossible to doubt the truth of the opinion modestly expressed by Mr. Bessemer, that others will improve upon his invention, and that his process will not receive its full development for many years to come. There is no country in which its influence will be as extended as our own, in which so large a portion of the community is engaged, directly or indirectly, in arts connected with the manufacture of iron and steel; but there are others where its effects within a narrower sphere will be yet more striking, and yet more welcome. In some countries, where malleable iron is produced direct from the ore, the consumption of charcoal has become matter for serious alarm. In Sardinia, it has long been, to many reflecting minds, a subject of grave doubt whether the benefits to be derived from the development of this branch of industry were not more than outweighed by the wholesale destruction of the forests for fuel. We are glad to learn that Mr. Bessemer has not only secured the legitimate reward of his industry and ingenuity by the grant of patent rights in almost every part of Europe, but that, alive to the greatness of his invention, he has resolved to adopt a wise and liberal policy in the grant of licences, and to place the use of his process within the reach of all persons who may be desirous of availing themselves of its important advantages.

REVIEWS.

THE MARQUIS DE DANGEAU.*

ONE of the plagues of modern historians is that too many materials have been preserved. Rumour paints the vast variety of sources from which Mr. Macaulay has dug up the treasures of his History; and yet the amount of matter into which posterity will have to search for each year of the reign of Victoria, is at least fivefold that which we have to examine in order to describe a twelvemonth of the reign of Anne. The great bulk of this matter is of a character to preclude all but the professed historian from encountering it. But there is a class of books which stands half-way between those which the general reader opens for their intrinsic and permanent merits, and those which no one but an historian of the period is called upon to examine. To this class belongs the voluminous *Journal of the Marquis de Dangeau*. We must confess that it is one of the most hopelessly dull books which a well furnished library could possibly supply, and no one probably would ever think of opening it who did not wish to study in great detail the history of Louis XIV. But we do not know how to resist the plea which the editors of the work advance for its publication. They point to the *Memoirs of St. Simon*, and offer a corrective of that lively but malicious chronicle. They ask us to do justice to people who are long ago dead, and most of them forgotten, but who yet have a right not to be slandered in their tombs. St. Simon hated Madame de Maintenon, and laughed at her and the Court. Dangeau thought Versailles "a little heaven below." St. Simon told a good story of the King or the King's sons without the slightest remorse. Dangeau notes down the daily hunting and shooting of his sacred Majesty and his most illustrious offspring, as if the gods were come to earth again. Above all, St. Simon had a grudge against Dangeau himself—thought him the pink of respectability, but a bit of a fool—and sketched him with some of his most polished and stinging epigrams. We are asked to examine for ourselves whether Dangeau does not deserve to be held in higher estimation than the reader of St. Simon would be likely to hold him in. There is no reply to be made to this. We cannot say that we wish Dangeau to be injured to the end of time, and so we must reconcile ourselves to the publication of his *Journal* in twelve dreary volumes. Practically, the general reader will continue to read St. Simon, not because he is untrue, but because he is very

amusing, and will carefully put Dangeau on a top-shelf, because he is as dull as ditch-water. On the other hand, the student of the times of Louis XIV. will necessarily have to peruse Dangeau's *Journal*, because it furnishes a guide in verifying minute facts and we wish him joy of his task.

Philippe de Courcillon, Marquis de Dangeau, was born, as we learn from an introductory biography, in 1638, and at the age of twenty served as a captain of cavalry, under Turenne, in Flanders. After the Peace of the Pyrenees, he volunteered into the service of Spain, and on returning to France was made colonel of a new regiment, formed in 1663, of sons of the nobility. The Queen, on his entrance into the court circle, showed a grateful appreciation of the services he had rendered to his native land, and he was soon in great favour. He knew that to advance he must please; and, as the readiest way, he set himself to learn the fashionable games at cards. This seems to have been his great success. Madame de Sévigné describes his skill in terms of the warmest admiration. He kept himself by it in a handsome manner, and drew a great deal more from *réversi* than from his estate in Maine. He was next promoted to the delicate office of making love-verses for his royal master. The King was beginning to hint his royal wishes to Mdlle. de la Vallière, and he thought rhyme at once the most delicate and the most effective channel. The lady wished to reply; but neither the king nor his mistress had much turn for poetry, and so each, unknown to the other, employed Dangeau. In the morning, this fertile poet expressed his ardent passion to the fairest of shepherdesses, and in the evening returned himself a modest but piquant answer. We are told that this lasted a year; and then the lady, in a moment of frankness, informed her royal lover that she did not make her own poetry—the King confessed as much on his part—and then, as the narrator of the anecdote naively adds, *ce petit commerce cessa*. The biographer of Dangeau, who writes in a spirit of fervent hero-worship, gives this creditable anecdote with the utmost enthusiasm; and finding that one authority mentions the name of another lady than Mdlle. de la Vallière, gravely disputes whether it is more probable that Dangeau performed this curious office twice, or that one of the storytellers is wrong.

"This easy and brilliant gift of rhyming, this quality of the King's private poet," was, the biographer hopes, the real reason which procured Dangeau the honour of having Boileau's *Satire on Nobility* dedicated to him. He received a further literary distinction in being elected, in 1668, a Member of the Academy. He also won another honour about the same time, being appointed, in 1667, Governor of Touraine; but this distinction he had to buy, and St. Simon says he bought it very dear. He was sent on an embassy to the Elector-Palatine a few years afterwards; and, although he did nothing, he acquitted himself to the king's satisfaction. In 1680, he gave 350,000 livres for the appointment of *chevalier d'honneur* to the bride of the Dauphin. Nothing that a Court could give was now too great for him; and in 1686, he married a lady of almost royal blood—a distant cousin of the house of Bavaria. His *Journal* commences shortly before this marriage, and is continued down to 1720, in which year he died. He thus gives us a minute chronicle of the daily doings of the French Court for upwards of thirty-five years. There is not much to add to his life, except that he had one more honour granted him in 1693, when he was made Grand Master of the Orders of Carmel and St. Lazarus, and that he had an only son, who turned out as the sons of respectable and successful fathers are apt to turn out, and who died young, after an ill-spent life. With this exception, a human life could not have been more full of external prosperity than that of Dangeau, and it would be hard to find one less interesting. Probably he worked hard for his place, but it is not a kind of labour that awakens sympathy. Voltaire describes him as a "vieux valet de chambre imbécile, qui se mêlait de faire des gazettes de toutes les sottises qu'il entendait dans les antichambres." This makes the modern biographer angry, but it is a rough way of saying the truth. Dangeau was a *valet de chambre*, one of the highest class, wearing the finest clothes, and receiving the largest pay. He did his work, and took what he could get. It is no use going into bursts of enthusiasm about a man who earned a great many fine titles and decorations by playing well at cards and writing love-verses to order. A flunkey may be a very virtuous man, and probably Dangeau had many of the excellences of his class. There is no reason to cry him up or down. For eighty-four years he got the best things earth could give him, and now it is a pity he should not be allowed to sleep quietly under it.

Dry and weary work as it is to read consecutively any great number of the pages of such a work, there is something in its general character which may arrest our attention. No book could show more strikingly the feelings with which Louis XIV. was regarded. He received a kind of worship that is without a parallel. Far more fulsome adulation was offered to the Emperors of Rome in the latter days of the Empire; and the present rulers of China or Persia are accustomed to be addressed in the language of a more flowery and poetical homage. But in the *Journal of Dangeau* we find, in sober prose, and in unaffected terms, a continual recognition or assumption that the King of France was divided from the rest of mankind by a real and impassable barrier. What he did, however small and trifling the action, was not to be criticised, scarcely to be praised, but to be humbly and thankfully recorded. "The King hunted, the King went to chapel, the King went out shooting." Dangeau

* *Journal du Marquis de Dangeau*. Publié en entier pour la première fois par MM. Soulie, Dusseux, de Chennervièrès, Mantz, de Montaignon; avec les Additions inédites du Duc de St. Simon publiées par M. Feuillet de Conches. Tomes 1-5. Paris: Didot. 1834-6.

stores up these as precious facts which it concerned all men to know. He never got tired of these facts because they were small, or were repeated. "After mass the King went out shooting," must occur several hundred times in his Journal. That it made no earthly difference, except to the royal constitution, whether the monarch took his exercise or not, never occurred to the old *valet-de-chambre*. St. Simon says of him that he lived on nothing but air, and that it perfectly contented him. But it was a sign of the times that a man could feed on the air that hung about the King, and feel so happy. It is the quietness, the calmness of his worship, that is its great characteristic. His lively enemy says that his idolatry, by reason of its incessant display, had got into his very marrow. That reverence for another, not because he was the least better or wiser than other people, but because he was a king, and the source of wealth and honour, should get into any one's marrow, is a curious fact in our common nature.

The publication of such a book as Dangeau's Journal challenges observation, both on account of its size and because it undeniably contributes some information with respect to the reign of Louis XIV. But the greater part of it is like what a collection of the Court news of the present day would be fifty years hence. The Queen walked on the slopes—Prince Albert went out shooting—the Prince of Wales rode with Mr. Gibbs. Imagine these statements repeated several thousand times, and a good notion is obtained of Dangeau's Journal. Occasionally there is a variety in the information. The appointments made by the King, the pensions granted, the interviews accorded, are carefully noted down. Of the France outside Versailles there is no mention. Dangeau does not seem to have had a single interest beyond what the Court supplied. Nor does he give us a picture of the Court itself, or make us acquainted with the character, motives, principles, or history of any human being. Few writers have had the distinction of leaving behind them a work that will necessarily find its way into all large libraries with so little in its contents to recommend it.

THE CHINESE AND THEIR REBELLIONS.*

WE have already noticed the opinions which Mr. Meadows advances in his preface upon the introduction into this country of the Chinese system of competitive examinations for the Civil Service. From those opinions we dissent, but we think that his work is very important and interesting, though we fear that some defects in its execution will hinder its obtaining much popularity. Mr. Meadows's original intention was to publish three separate books—a description of the Chinese people, a narrative of his personal experiences, more especially of such as referred to the Chinese rebellion, and an essay on Competitive Examinations in England and China. Ill health prevented—or, as we will hope, only deferred—the completion of this plan, and induced Mr. Meadows to publish the work before us, which contains a large part of the materials collected for his entire undertaking. Some confusion is inseparable from this mode of proceeding, and the author is obliged to advise his readers to begin with the Essay on Civilization, which concludes the book, to go on to Chapter 18, and then to read the first 17, and the 19th and 20th Chapters in their natural order. Though such counsel comes rather strangely from a man who wishes to enforce by law a method of directing letters based upon the logical principle of proceeding from the general to the particular, we can endorse the soundness of the advice from our own experience. We ought, however, to warn our readers that Mr. Meadows's book is not light reading, and that he has not done much to lighten a difficult task. Those who follow our example in reading the whole work, will probably agree with us in coming to the conclusion that Mr. Meadows is a patient and an accurate thinker, though his mind is less comprehensive than logical, and though his style is disfigured by occasional outbreaks of not very refined ridicule. The number of persons, however, entitled to form such an opinion—or, indeed, any opinion at all—upon Mr. Meadows's speculative powers, will, we fear, be greatly diminished by the circumstance that he is a very bad economist of space. He gives not only his opinions, but the history of the process by which they were formed; and he illustrates them by such a profusion of examples that we fear his book will be very undeservedly despised by that large class of readers to whom the abuse of the word "practical" stands in the place of all accurate thought.

A very acute thinker, being grievously worried by one of his friends who had devoted half his life to the extraction of a universal modern history from the book of *Revelations*, somewhat puzzled him by observing that his interpretation laboured under the remarkable defect of omitting all reference whatever to China. A history of the world which made no mention of a third part of the human race seemed to him somewhat defective. Whatever may be thought of the force of the objection, the omission indicated by the objector pointed to the most curious problem in the history of the world. Three hundred and sixty millions of the human race have been, by their own act, separated entirely from

the rest of it. The oldest and largest of human empires is almost absolutely unknown to us, and what little we do know about it reveals to us a state of things radically dissimilar to anything with which we are acquainted. Mr. Meadows has at least the merit of appreciating the vast importance of this great wonder, and of resenting the self-sufficient and shallow views which have frequently been put forth about so great a nation. We disagree with some of his opinions. We have no claim to sit in judgment on the correctness of his facts, though we think he is rather too favourably disposed towards the people amongst whom he has lived so long; but his account of them has the great merit of being, at any rate, conceivable. It is not bad on the face of it; for he does not, like so many other writers, represent the existence of a policy so vast and so durable as the result of a hideous mixture of wickedness and folly. It is, therefore, with great interest, and with gratitude to the author, that we proceed to lay before our readers some account of his general views of the Chinese character. We reserve for future notice his account of the origin, nature, and prospects of the present rebellion.

Whilst studying in a German University, it first occurred to Mr. Meadows to ask, whether China was a civilized country. During the twelve years of his residence in that empire, he seems to have pondered over the question with a growing conviction that, in so far as civilization consists in influencing men by their feelings rather than by their interests or by main force, the Chinese are more civilized than most, if not than any, of the Occidental nations. This opinion is grounded almost entirely upon the system (which we explained in a former number) of Civil Service Examinations. The Government is a despotism of the most unqualified kind; but in ordinary times it is cheerfully submitted to because its powers are exercised by those whose mental superiority—ascertained in a manner satisfactory to the body of the nation—qualifies them, in the opinion of the multitude, for the position which they hold. Probably there is no nation in the world in which people are so unanimous in honouring intellectual preeminence. The whole power of the Government is distributed according to the result of the examinations for the Civil Service; and as success in these examinations is almost the only object towards which a Chinese can direct his ambition, the whole of the national education is constructed with reference to them. The effect of this has been to assimilate to each other, in an extraordinary degree, the minds of the educated part of the nation. The examinations are based upon the teaching of certain sacred books, said to have been written in the fourth, fifth, and sixth century B.C. by Confucius and others, as interpreted by various commentators. Of these, Chootsze was the most remarkable, who flourished in the twelfth century, A.D.

The fundamental doctrine of these writers, as explained by Mr. Meadows, is a kind of Pantheism, tending towards, if not involving, Manichæism. They teach that all things are only the manifestation of one supreme or ultimate principle, from which every species of being has been developed by a method of working altogether mysterious and ineffable. They also teach, as far as we can understand Mr. Meadows's explanation, that all evil comes from matter, though we do not understand him to say that it is their opinion that matter is, in itself, evil. This kind of speculation has obtained undisputed possession over the minds of the educated classes. It is, indeed, obviously the most intellectual form of belief accessible to them, for the only other religions which exist in China are grossly superstitious and idolatrous forms of Buddhism and Taoism. Even those, however, who are habitual idol-worshippers, only set up this worship alongside of the pantheistic creed of the officials. They adore the idol, but they look upon him as only one link in the immense chain of fate, which they call *Teen*, i.e., Heaven. The estimation in which the Emperor is held is a curious illustration of this. To the mind of a Chinese, who knows of no settled government but his own, China is the world, and the Emperor is the head of the world. He is, to educated and uneducated alike, the *Teen Tsze*—the Son of Heaven. To the educated Chinese, he is the highest of the innumerable manifestations of the Ultimate Principle—to the idol-worshipper, he is a mysterious being, reigning by a paramount divine right, and far more exalted than the common run of idols, whom he can promote in the scale of gods, if he pleases, by an Imperial decree. Nothing is so striking in Mr. Meadows's account of the opinions of the Chinese as the extraordinary union which their philosophy presents of spiritualism and materialism. Looked at from one point of view, they would seem to be incapable of rising above the objects of sense, or of drawing any distinction between the visible and the invisible. The Emperor and the Government are, in their opinion, the highest functions of the ultimate Principle, and in strict, though strange consistency, they hold them responsible for every kind of physical calamity. Plagues, bad seasons, disastrous wars, earthquakes, even comets, are all considered as the fault of the Government, which is supposed to have, in some manner, got out of harmony with the Ultimate Principle, and so to have disturbed the order of nature. Looked at in another light, no nation is less fitly described as materialists than the Chinese. They have a kind of horror of matter, or of brute force. They look at the invisible principle rather than at the substance—the idea rather than the fact. However coarse may be the forms in which

* *The Chinese and their Rebellions, viewed in connexion with their National Philosophy, Ethics, Legislation, and Administration; to which is added an Essay on Civilization and its Present State in the East and West.* By Thomas Taylor Meadows, Chinese Interpreter in H.M. Civil Service. London: Smith, Elder, and Co. 1856.

their theories may be embodied, it is the idea, and not its embodiment, which they reverence. Mr. Meadows gives some curious philological illustrations of this. They use, for example, a word which may be translated as "spiritual," in the sense of important, precisely as we often use "material." They would say, for example, "It is most spiritual to observe," where we should say "most material." It is to this habit that Mr. Meadows ascribes the extreme aversion of the Chinese to fight when they quarrel. It seems to them a barbarous manner of settling a dispute. He also observes that this want of what has been called a healthy animalism was the cause of their ignominious defeat in their war with us; and we should suppose that it has much to do with the extreme physical languor which still induces them to look with wonder and disgust at the Western barbarians taking exercise on the walks belonging to the factories at Canton and Shanghai.

We cannot say that we are much delighted by such a picture. A state of society in which a semi-Manichæan Pantheism is the highest form of belief attainable, and in which the result of a polity older than the oldest historical States of Western Europe is a despotism of the educated over the uneducated, is far from realizing our notion of that well-proportioned development of all the different constituent parts of human nature, which we understand by the word "civilization." Mr. Meadows enters at very great length into the question of the meaning of that word. Indeed his essay on the subject fills no less than 148 pages—nearly a quarter—of his book. It is carefully elaborated, though very ill-written, and amounts to this—that civilization consists in substituting moral agencies for intellectual or physical agencies "in man's struggle with nature." We do not think we do the theory injustice in saying that it turns upon the propriety of addressing the feelings, in preference to the understanding or the animal passions. We do not wish to enter into so wide a controversy as this doctrine suggests, but we may make a few remarks upon it. It seems to us to describe, not civilization, so much as one of its characteristics. So far as government is concerned, we should say, that the habitual appeal to "moral agencies" was anything but a proof of high civilization. Nobody will dispute that the government of reasonable grown-up men by other reasonable grown-up men has much more analogy to the government of a civilized State than the authority which grown-up men exercise over children. Now, between man and man, in the common affairs of life, there is no government, in the proper sense of the word—that is, no compulsion to adopt a particular line of conduct—except that which is either intellectual or physical. A master says to his workman, "I have nothing to do with your idleness or industry, but unless you get my work done by such a time, I shall not employ you." This is what Mr. Meadows calls intellectual compulsion. The law says to a criminal, "If you commit murder, I shall hang you." This is physical compulsion. The father says to his child, "See how much better it is to be industrious, and to restrain your passions, than to be idle and self-indulgent. I shall keep you from doing this and that, not because I care for your doing or leaving undone the particular action, but because it involves a principle." This is moral compulsion. Surely the universal reduction of the principles of government to functions of this kind can only exist in a barbarous state. The position is one which can only be assumed by a superior to an inferior. It is one which becomes impossible when the person governed and the person governing stand nearly on the same level. The parent is constantly interfering with the child, though principally by way of direction and admonition—the law interferes little with a grown-up man, but when it does, it interferes in the tone of direct absolute command, backed by physical compulsion. Surely the man is not in a less civilized state than the child. When the Government issues advice about the cholera, it does so for the benefit of the poor—when it has anything to say to the rich upon the subject, it speaks through the Quarantine laws, or the Act for the Removal of Nuisances. Does this show that the rich are in a lower state of civilization than the poor? Where the Government is always lecturing, educating, remonstrating, inculcating principles of filial piety, giving lessons in morality, and carrying on the whole system of administration by moral force, we should be inclined to draw the conclusion that it has a low opinion of the state of civilization amongst its subjects. If they were highly civilized, the presumption would be that they stood in no need of all this. We cannot agree with Mr. Froude—though no doubt Mr. Meadows would—in thinking that the omission in modern Acts of Parliament of moral exhortations by way of preamble, shows a lower estimation of the value of morality than our ancestors possessed. It appears to us to show a higher estimation of the general level of good sense. It would be a poor compliment to a man's understanding to begin a conversation by arguing that honesty is the best policy. For these reasons, Mr. Meadows's evidence as to the civilization of China does not satisfy our minds. His opinion as to the matter of fact is no doubt entitled to weight and to consideration, and we are glad to learn that he thinks far more highly of the intelligence, energy, and courage of the Chinese than most of those who have preceded him in the inquiry; but his explanation of the causes of this state of things appears to us deficient. That there are very great exceptions to the theory of Chinese civilization, he himself admits in the fullest manner. A nation which

practises idolatry, polygamy, judicial torture, and slavery, has a good deal to learn in respect of civilization, even though it may have a complete system of competitive examinations for the Civil Service. To us there seems to be nothing incongruous in the different institutions which Mr. Meadows specifies. That a small minority of *doctrinaires* should despise the majority of ignorant persons whom they rule, and should at once lecture them and whip them, is only an exemplification of the old proverb of "flog'ee and preach'ee too." Where the Government gives so much good advice, we must in charity presume that it is wanted.

We wish to speak of Mr. Meadows in the most respectful manner, because we are convinced both that there is a great deal in his book, and that few of his readers will find it out; but we cannot deny that he is the hardest and rashest speculator that we have met with for some time. Anything more audacious than a great part of his Essay on Civilization it is impossible to imagine. It is not surprising that a man who went straight from the University of Munich to Canton, and who, for twelve years, had probably no neighbour within thousands of miles who interested himself in German metaphysics, should come in a questionable shape before English readers; but we doubt whether he will find many people to agree with him in advocating an unlimited liberty of divorce on the mere wish of either party, or in making such a recommendation as this, amongst others equally ludicrous:—

I have no hesitation in recommending the Post-office administration to commence, first advising, and after due time enforcing, the universal adoption of the Chinese mode of addressing letters for conveyance by post.

He gives elsewhere the following illustration:—

To England country—York county—Hull town—King-street—the shop of such and such a sign—and inside of that, Brown, Thomas. It can be very easily done. Let clear instructions . . . be printed. After a month or two, notice could be given that all letters the addresses of which did not commence with the name of a county or (very) large town would be opened and returned. After a year, the whole system of descending throughout from generals to particulars could be made compulsory.

Fancy some clerk, flushed with having obtained in a competitive examination a subordinate position in a remote Lincolnshire post-office, explaining to a poor old soul who had tried to send five-and-twenty shillings to her son in the Crimea, that it could not be, because she had not descended from generals to particulars, as thus:—Crimea—Balaklava—Regiment, 87th—Saunders, Thomas. We once knew of an admirable house-keeper, who, after superintending her master's establishment in Paris, came home with the conclusion that "the French were so silly—why, they say *savon blanc* when they mean *blanc savon*." It would be hopeless enough to attempt to change the English language by Act of Parliament: but a man's mind must be in a wonderful state when he supposes that, under any circumstances whatever, we should begin to talk about horses white, instead of white horses, because some crotchety successor of Mr. Rowland Hill might think it best that we should "descend from generals to particulars."

We have cited this wonderful *escapade* as a specimen of the extravagances into which an able and thoughtful man is betrayed by living at a distance from the great centres of national life; but we have been very unfortunate if we have not conveyed to our readers the impression that Mr. Meadows has a great deal more good sense than such follies would lead one to suppose.

CARTESIAN PHILOSOPHY.*

IT is now some twelve years since the *Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques* awarded to M. Bouillier (conjointly with M. Bordas Dumoulin) the prize which they had thrown open to competition for the best work on the history and tendencies, the merits and defects, of the Cartesian philosophy, as displayed either in the writings of its great founder, or in those of his numerous disciples and descendants, collateral or direct. To those who believe, with Leibnitz, that that philosophy is "the ante-chamber of truth," or, with Hegel, that "the influences of Descartes on his age, and on the development of philosophy, cannot be exaggerated," the wisdom of the Academy, in thus provoking inquiry on a subject so vast and so important, will not need vindication. The work of M. Bouillier, thus honoured with a moiety of the prize, was published in due course, under the title of *Histoire et Critique de la Révolution Cartésienne*. It has since received large additions; and in the shape in which it has recently been given to the world, in the two volumes now before us, the author affirms that it is the most complete history which has yet been written of the great era of French philosophy. It will be the object of the following remarks to examine the grounds on which this claim is advanced.

In perusing the opening chapter, which contains a *précis* of the state of philosophy anterior to Descartes, the English reader will do well to repress any vehement indignation at the disparaging tone in which the author estimates the services rendered to philosophy by Bacon. On the one hand, we have scarcely a right to expect that M. Bouillier would be more lavish of his praise of the English Chancellor than our own Macaulay; and, on the other, the sequel of the work may perhaps suggest the doubt whether Englishmen have not, for the most part, been

* *Histoire de la Philosophie Cartésienne*. Par Francisque Bouillier, Correspondant de l'Institut, Doyen de la Faculté des Lettres de Lyon. 2 vols. Paris: Durand.

equally churlish in refusing to acknowledge the merits of Descartes.

After taking leave of the philosophy of the Renaissance, M. Bouillier breaks ground in the field of inquiry more immediately before him, by an interesting *résumé* of the principal events in Descartes' life. In considering the philosopher, he wisely felt that he was bound not to forget the man. Descartes' early education under the Jesuits, his campaigning in the Thirty Years' War, his retirement in Holland for twenty years, and his death at Christina's court in Sweden, are placed before us with a clearness and simplicity which greatly enhance the interest with which, in subsequent chapters, we trace the growth of his intellectual life. On what slight threads are hung the destinies of man! Possibly, if the young officer in Tilly's army had not been shut up in winter quarters at Neuburg on the Danube, with none to talk to, with no cares to molest, or passions to betray—if circumstances thus fortuitous had not driven him to feed upon his own reflections—he might have lived and died unheeded and unknown, instead of becoming the founder of modern philosophy. With regard to this early period of his career, no novel can vie in interest with the details which Descartes has given us in the famous *Discours de la Méthode pour bien conduire sa Raison, et chercher la vérité dans les Sciences*. It is this work which M. Bouillier takes as his text-book in the exposition he gives of the doctrines and principles of its author. We think that the *Méditations* would have been a more judicious selection; but the result is the same, for, in illustration of the *Discours*, M. Bouillier's intimate acquaintance with the whole of Descartes' works enables him to bring to bear all needful corroboration from other treatises. Nearly at the outset of this exposition, he meets with that celebrated saying, *Cogito, ergo sum*, which may be called the *flat lux* of modern philosophy. It is now superfluous to remark that the logical copula therein employed must not lead us to mistake for a syllogism, and consequently to condemn as a *petitio principii*, what was in reality intended to be an axiomatic assertion of identity:—"I am conscious—that is, I exist." Various passages of Saint Augustine have repeatedly been employed to throw a doubt upon Descartes' originality with respect to this formula. But, as Pascal very wisely remarked—to say nothing of Descartes' own denial of the imputation—it is one thing to stumble, as it were, upon a form of words without any precise intention of evolving from it wide and deep meanings of universal application, and it is quite another thing consciously to embody, in the same or similar words, great cardinal principles which are to be pregnant with significance for all time. Some have even gone so far as to cast in the teeth of Descartes the words in which Plautus represents Sosius as endeavouring to convince himself of his own reality in the presence of his counterfeiter Mercury—just as if Descartes had merely busied himself with constructing a philosophical toy, to satisfy his mind as to the fact of his own personal existence. M. Bouillier, of course, treats such notions with deserved disdain; but this must not prevent us from declaring that, with all his admiration of his hero, he seems to have apprehended but imperfectly the vast consequences which hung upon the three words, *Cogito, ergo sum*, and which the development of modern philosophy was destined to fulfil. Descartes here hit upon that *inconcussum quid*—that immovable rock—against which all the efforts of scepticism cannot prevail. To say that in so doing he became the founder of psychological philosophy—that of antiquity and the middle ages being *cosmological* and *logical* respectively—would only give a vague and general idea of our meaning. Amid all the phenomena which he saw around him, about him, and within him, Descartes had succeeded in picking out one which presented a case of unique identity of a *thought* with a *thing*—of a *notion* with a *reality*. That phenomenon was himself—was man. The sceptic may tell us that between our notion of any of the objects in the world around us and the reality of those objects, there is a great gulf fixed, which all our reasoning will not be able to bridge over to his satisfaction. The *thing* and the *thought* are wholly independent, easily separable—the one does not palpably beget, is not palpably begotten of the other. But it is not thus with that inner world on which Descartes fixed his introverted gaze. The very fact of my consciousness, that is, of my *thinking myself*, is bound up, must stand or fall, with that self. The genesis of the *Ego*, or "I," is determined. The notion and the reality cannot here, even in thought, be conceived apart. On this sure and steadfast foundation—the oneness of consciousness and being—all philosophy worthy of the name was henceforth to build.

We regret that we can only give a few hasty indications of the consequences destined to flow from the formal enunciation of that great principle which is embodied in the Cartesian formula. We are also obliged to pass over that triad of *a priori* proofs respecting the existence of God which forms the subject of M. Bouillier's fourth chapter. We may, however, refer the reader on this subject to the opening chapters of Jules Simon's *Religion Naturelle*, and to the concluding sections of M. de Rémusat's admirable work on Anselm. M. de Rémusat, in particular, will go far to remove the unfavourable impression which Mr. Rogers's somewhat feeble Essay on Descartes may have left upon the minds of readers of the *Edinburgh Review*. How all the various metaphysical or ontological proofs of the existence of God, by which men have endeavoured to corroborate

what may be called the physical and moral arguments, will themselves admit of being woven up, as it were, into one great demonstration, founded on inferences from a reason that is human to a reason that is divine, may be seen in the pages of Plato and Anselm, Aquinas and Cudworth, Fénelon and Bossuet. Cudworth is, we believe, the first who presented the arguments in set form (c. v. § 106,) as a regular proof of the existence of Deity.

Six more chapters are devoted to an exposition of the doctrines and systems peculiar to Descartes. In accuracy and sobriety they leave nothing to be desired. But we think M. Bouillier might have brought greater freshness and vigour to the consideration of such themes, without in any way impairing the judicial calmness of his conclusions. His partiality for Descartes does not blind him to the dangerous tendencies which lurked in many of his opinions—tendencies abundantly manifested in the subsequent history of philosophy. The so-called "liberty of indifference" assigned to Deity, by which the will of God is inconsiderately severed from His infinite wisdom and perfection, and arbitrary caprice put in the place of an order and a law which are for ever and ever—the mistaken identification of the functions of a conservator with those of a Creator, by which all created beings are reft of every active principle, of all independence and causality, and become mere passive machines in the hands of a supreme and alone efficient cause—these and other grave errors in the Cartesian philosophy, are pointed out as they severally present themselves; whilst a fuller discussion of their nature and effects is reserved for those succeeding chapters in which the author shows how they bore deadly fruit under the auspices of Spinoza or Malebranche. By far the feeblest part of the exposition of Cartesianism proper is that which relates to Descartes' physical and mathematical theories, which are so strongly tinged with his philosophical views that they cannot with advantage be considered apart. Any one, however, who is desirous of fuller information to fill up this lacuna may consult the rival Memoir, already referred to, by M. Borda Dumoulin, who divided with our author the suffrages of the Academy. The two works are in some degree complementary to each other.

These volumes unfold the history, not merely of a philosopher, but also of a philosophical dynasty. In fact, a great part of the first, and the whole of the second, are devoted not to the founder, but to his successive descendants who, in various countries, were indebted for their general cast of thought to the influence of Descartes. We also find full discussions devoted to those who made themselves more or less conspicuous in the history of letters and philosophy as Descartes' opponents. Spinoza and Malebranche necessarily come in for a large share in the narrative. It is impossible to overrate the interest of this portion of the work, or the sagacity with which the author discovers, not merely the connecting links by which these and other thinkers are related to Descartes, but the differences by which they are distinguished, and the particular points where the road divides, and where those who were once fellow wayfarers in the realms of thought part company, to meet no more. All are aware that it is to the doctrine of "*Substance*" that Spinoza owes his affiliation on Descartes. Where Descartes had spoken with reserve, and had been careful to hedge round his statements and definitions with restrictions, Spinoza took those statements in their full breadth, and cast aside all the correctives by which they had been modified in the pages of their author. To the principle that God was the only substance, Descartes had hastened to subjoin, as a preservative against Fatalism and Pantheism, that created things might also be called substances, but in a different sense. Of this *postscript* Spinoza took no heed, but plunged headlong into Pantheism, by asserting that all created beings were but *modes* or *affections* of God. And while Cartesianism thus begot in the mind of Spinoza a kind of cosmological Pantheism, it gave rise, under the auspices of Malebranche, to a Pantheism which we may call theological. At the time that Malebranche was stigmatizing Spinoza as a "wretch and a monster, a horrible and ridiculous chimera," he was, in fact, treading in the same path as the man he despised—the same path, but towards a different goal. For while they were philosophically one, religiously and theologically they were twain. Nothing is more curious than to trace, in the pages of M. Bouillier, the analogies and antipathies which by turns unite and dis sever the Jew and the Oratorian. While Spinoza did but give loose to the wild speculations of a crazy ontology, Malebranche—the "divine Malebranche," as Buffon styles him—was inditing, in a spirit deeply Christian and religious, an exaggerated commentary on those words of the Apostle, "In Him we live and move, and have our being."

We have not space to follow M. Bouillier through the remainder of his inquiries. Nicole, Bossuet, and Fénelon—not to mention numerous other French writers of less exalted reputation—are called upon in turn to confess their obligations to Descartes. But in tracing these Cartesian influences, M. Bouillier does not confine himself to France. Germany, Switzerland, Italy, England, are all of them traversed and ransacked, in quest either of the disciples or of the antagonists of Descartes. To mention only the chief, we may quote the names of Leibnitz and Vico, Cudworth and Clarke. How comes it, by the way, that the name of Berkeley does not figure among the number? M. Bouillier is as impatient of limitations of time as of space. He does not stop with the seventeenth century—he follows up the fortunes of Cartesianism in the eighteenth, and shows how

it shared the general reaction against all established forms of thought, whether political, philosophical, or social. Its physical tenets received their quietus from the discoveries of Newton—its metaphysical tenets came in for the same reprobation, and were finally supplanted by the philosophy of Locke. It was left to the nineteenth century to upset the sensualism which reigned throughout the eighteenth, and to reunite the broken chain of metaphysical traditions which connects it with Descartes. The ground which for more than half a century was lost has been regained, and Descartes, Bossuet, and Fénelon are reinstated in the thrones of a pure and lofty spiritualism.

As we lay these volumes down, we naturally ask ourselves the question—What is the estimate they have led us to form of Descartes? What are his claims to occupy the position often assigned him as the founder of a truly royal line of thinkers—as the parent, or, as it were, patron saint, of modern philosophy? As it may somewhat jar upon the feelings of Bacon's countrymen to be told that these claims are, in the work before us, abundantly established, we shall endeavour to give a few brief hints as to the reasons for such a conclusion. It must never be forgotten that Descartes' greatness lies, not in the excellence of this tenet or that theory, but in the method by which he showed that all tenets and theories are to be tested and verified. He divides with Plato the imperishable honour of having thrown into general circulation a method which answers the two conditions by which alone the soundness of a logical method can be secured. These conditions are, that it should be universal in its application, and purely rational in its nature and source. Like the *Platonic Dialectic*, it must be the "Science of Sciences"—it must mark out the path which the mind must tread in its search after the ultimate laws of any and every order of facts. Excellent methods may be in use for the prosecution of mathematical, or physical, or any other particular science; but these are methods, not the method of methods—they are special, not general implements. Philosophy alone can here satisfy our need. Hence the second condition, that method must be purely rational in its source. This search after premises, to be successful, must not quit the mind itself. And thus the *Cogito, ergo sum* of Descartes is but the natural consequence of the *Nosce teipsum* of the Athenian sage. It was in this cardinal verity of human consciousness, this reflex reference to the *Ego*, that he found that criterion of clear evidence by which all the results of his mental operations were henceforth to be tested. It was this *inconcussum quid* that the founder of psychology as a philosophical instrument made the *πρῶτον ὅν* from which he was to raise himself and generations yet unborn to the knowledge of self, of God, and of the world. It was in thus reaching after some ultimate ground of unity which should underlie all laws and all facts, from the least to the loftiest, that he prepared the way for some of the noblest discoveries in mental and physical science.

We cannot pursue these reflections further. What we are chiefly anxious to impress upon the reader is, that Descartes has won the exalted height he will never cease to occupy, less by the letter than by the spirit of his teaching. It only remains for us to say that these volumes form one of the most valuable contributions to philosophical literature which France has given to the world since the publication of Cousin's *Cours de Philosophie*.

SICILY AND NAPLES.*

THIS work is the production, not of a traveller, but of a tourist. As the countries which it describes, although less familiar than some others, are tolerably well known to intelligent people in the more civilized parts of Europe, it would be absurd to look in these pages for stirring adventures or original discoveries; and a glance will show that *Sicilien und Neapel* is not raised by the brilliancy of its style, by the depth of its research, or by the excellence of its arrangement, to any very high place in German literature. But when we have said this, we have told the worst which we have to tell of it. Minute description by a clever and cultivated man must almost always be interesting, and of that we have abundance in this exceedingly pleasant book.

Dr. Albert Carus is a son of the well-known Dr. Carus of Dresden, and he made the journey detailed in this volume in the *suite* of Prince George of Saxony, a young man of two or three and twenty, son of the present king. The book consists of a series of letters, written to various members of Dr. Carus's family, and is full of the sort of expressions which usually characterize that kind of composition. A few minutes before six o'clock on the evening of Thursday, the 20th of November, 1853, Dr. Carus, carefully provided with "Pelz und Fussack," and accompanied by a flock of affectionate relatives, arrived at the terminus of the Dresden and Leipzig railway. After showers of "Grüsse" and avalanches of "Lebewohls" had been given and received, the train started, and hurried our excellent and eminently domestic traveller from his home on the banks of the Elbe. From Leipzig he went by Munich to Coire, and from Coire to Turin, where he had great searchings of heart. What was to come of his tremendous enterprise? Would he really be able to survive so long a separation "von den Lieben?" Above all, would he be able to bring back, safe and sound, the illustrious Prince whose health had been committed to his care? A quotation from Horace comforted

him, and he went on to Genoa. A few days took him to Rome, and a few more to Naples.

The volume contains a very full account of Naples and its environs; but Rome and Florence are reserved as a *bonne bouche* for the public, should it receive the present instalment of Carusian experiences with proper good-nature and thankfulness. On the 27th of December, Prince George and his *suite* steamed out past Capri, and held on their course for Sicily. They found the Mediterranean in an indifferent humour—not quite so bad as that in which it greeted Mr. Stahr when he made this same journey—bad enough, however, to work woe even to a Saxon prince. *Hochderselbe*, we regret to say, was extremely sick. After some hours, the weather improved, and in the early morning the blue line of the mountains of Sicily rose dimly to the south. Gradually their outlines became more distinct. Monte Pellegrino, "the most beautiful promontory in the world," as Goethe calls it, stood up on the right—on the left the lower land about Cape Zafarana came into view, and ere long the anchor was dropped off the quays of Palermo. This most beautiful city does not show itself in all its loveliness to the traveller who approaches it from the sea. It is not till he climbs some of the neighbouring heights that he realizes the full glory of the Queen of the Mediterranean. From no point is Palermo beheld to greater advantage than from the telegraph-station at the summit of Monte Pellegrino. The mountains, as seen from this point, seem to bend round it in a graceful curve, and give to the rich and rejoicing plain through which the Oreto rushes to the sea that peculiar form which long ago won for it the name of "the shell of gold." Our travellers climbed to this look-out, seeing by the way the chapel of the tutelary saint; for it was to this mountain, as the legend tells, that

Far from the youth of Sicily,
St. Rosalie retired to God.

Nor is this the only story of human nobleness or virtue which sanctifies the spot, for it was on this same Monte Pellegrino that Hamilcar so long and so ably defended himself against the Romans.

Half-way up the mountains, about four miles from Palermo, is the old town and the stately cathedral of Monreale, the grandest monument of the Norman kings which remains in Sicily. The road to it leads across the Concha d'Oro. Dr. Carus, like all travellers who are not *blasé* with the vegetation of the South, cannot say enough about this plain. The aloes and the Indian figs in the hedges, the marigolds, the anemones, the jonquils, and the narcissuses, all blossoming in midwinter, made him wild with delight; and as for the "Oranien und Citronenbaume," his book is really heavy with their perfume. His account of Monreale is faithful, and will be new to most people who have not visited the place, or who do not take a deep interest in the history of architecture. The Zisa Palace, which retains the name, slightly corrupted, of the daughter of an old Moorish governor, is to the Saracenic period of Sicilian history what Monreale is to the Norman. There is still in its faded beauty something of the voluptuous grace of the Alhambra. In the centre of the court is a little fountain, over which the true maidenhair—dear to the eye of the collector of ferns—hangs in luxuriant tresses. Nature thus does homage to the Lady Aziza-Paynim, while recalling, perhaps, her name to some who look upon the work of her father, now that "the spider has spun his web in the imperial palace, and the owl has sung her death-song on the towers of Agrasiab." It is curious to observe how many traces of their occupation the Moors have left in Sicily—curious we say, for although they were long lords of the land, so many centuries have passed since they gave way to stronger invaders that we are apt half to forget them. Not only is their stamp upon numerous ruins, and such names of places as Alcamo and Salermi, but everywhere in the streets of Palermo there peep out little pieces of architecture which seem to have been suggested by Moorish buildings. The lines of latticed balconies in the Toledo, whence the nuns watch the religious processions or civil pomps and vanities which pass by, are the connecting link between two systems of manners and two superstitions. Who ever saw them without thinking of "the cities and the scenes of forlorn Asia," with her "silent men and women sadly veiled." Dr. Carus seems always to have felt a reasonable pleasure when he saw these poor recluses look a little "weltlich," although he is not as sentimental on the subject as old Brydone, who was apt to be sorry after talking with "amiable nuns."

The Prince and his *suite* remained a short time in Palermo. Dr. Carus daguerreotypes their life. We visit with them the tomb of Frederick II. and the church from which went forth the signal for the Sicilian vespers. We drive to Bagharia, and are glad to be spared the grotesque follies of the Villa Pallagonia. We accompany them to the great bone-cave, and help to load their *valet-de-place*, Luigi Ranese, with organic remains and other treasures. In the suburbs we pass into the little cottages full of picturesque discomfort—every house a Bassano. But we most like to accompany them in their rambles amidst the gardens which break like a green sea around the city. "Bei Gott," says Dr. Carus, in a fit of enthusiasm on beholding a pepper tree, "das Land wo der Pfeffer wächst ist schön!" and his royal master is hardly less delighted—plucking oranges with his own august hand.

From Palermo they made a trip into the western corner of the island, to try their wings, as it were, before sailing for the southern and eastern coast. Passing again through Monreale, and crossing a mountain pass, they arrived at Alcamo, and later

* *Sicilien und Neapel*. Von Dr. Albert Gustav Carus. Wurzen: 1856. London: Rolandi, Williams and Norgate.

at Calatafimi, the paradise of fleas. From this point they went to visit the Temple of Segesta, which stands in a lonely place among the hills, backed by a deep ravine through which a brawling torrent forces its headlong way. Dr. Carus mentions with just admiration the view from the ruins of the Greek Theatre, which is bounded by the distant Gulf of Castellamare, and ranges far over wide valleys where not a village, nor even a house, meets the eye. Only here and there a goatherd, with his ever-clambering flocks, and his large fierce white dogs, stands upon the hill-sides which look down on the Sinois and the Scamander of this once-famed Trojan colony. After a two hours' ride in the dark—very disagreeable, and, considering the nature of the path, not a little perilous—they returned to such accommodation as could be afforded by the detestable little town of Calatafimi. Thence they journeyed to Trapani, the Drepanum of other days—a large, bustling, and singularly handsome town, the emporium of the coral fishery, and the centre of the salt trade. Far more interesting than Trapani is the curious mountain which rises near it—the ancient Eryx, on whose precipitous summit is built the town of San Giuliano. The climate of this place is very different from that of the lovely plain below. A hundred fine days in a year are considered a very fair allowance.

From Trapani, Dr. Carus returned to his favourite Hotel Trinaeria, and to his pleasant life in Palermo. There were more walks on the Marina in the soft Sicilian evenings, and more rambles amidst the orange-groves; but this could not last, and the bustle of preparation for departure began. At last, all the necessary provisions were collected. In Sicily, everything of this kind must be carried by the traveller—the inns supplying shelter, and nothing more. The last visits were paid, and the last look cast from the balcony on the bright sea, and Ustica lying far away.

Dr. Carus, after bidding good-bye, with many regrets, to the Sicilian capital, traversed the island to Girgenti, halting at Valledlunga, Caltanissetta and Canacati. The road lay sometimes over wild hills, sometimes through valleys rich with corn, which, even in the month of January, was far advanced. The people whom he met were rude and half-barbarous. Most of them were employed in transporting sulphur to the coast. In some places, the heaps of slag thrown up around the sulphur mines gave a weird and desolate appearance to the landscape; while, in others, large veins of gypsum looked like lines of newly-fallen snow. At Caltanissetta, a hospitable reception was given to the traveller by the Intendant of the province, Count San Secondo. This good man was much annoyed at the scanty justice which was done to the entertainment he had provided; but his annoyance became despair when a plum-pudding, in all the glory of flaming brandy, was about to leave the table untasted. What, he cried, will no one of you eat your national dish? An explanation followed; and it turned out that their excellent host, high in office though he was, believed Saxon, Anglo-Saxon, and Englishman to be convertible terms. All through this journey, as on their shorter excursion to Trapani, the prince and his followers were protected by *compagni-d'arme*. These men belong to a corps consisting chiefly of ex-banditti. They are well paid; but a certain proportion of their monthly allowance is kept back to form a fund out of which compensation may be made for any property which has been carried off by robbers. If, at the end of the year, no highway-robberies have been committed, the whole of this fund is divided; or if the sum in the reserve chest more than suffices to pay all demands on it, then the residue is divided. Thus the interest of these lawless men, who know every dangerous spot in Sicily, and are familiar with the persons by whom robberies are managed and with the agency by which booty is disposed of, is enlisted in the service of good order and public safety. At several points of his route, Dr. Carus seems to have apprehended danger; but we have known some of the wildest parts of the island traversed, since this plan was organized, by unarmed travellers in very dark nights, without the slightest molestation. At Girgenti, a short halt was made to examine the ruins of the rival of Syracuse, now fallen from its high estate, but still witnessing to its former greatness by its ruined temples, and the broken fragments of mighty pillars, round which the orchis grows tall and the acanthus spreads its leaves. From Girgenti the travellers returned to Caltanissetta, enjoying a distant but noble view of Etna by the way. Thence they crossed the country to Syracuse. It is delightfully amusing to learn that in February, 1854, just before the Guards started for Malta, the small tyrant of Naples was fortifying Syracuse against an expected attack of the English fleet. From Syracuse they proceeded along the coast to Catania and Taormina—*Taormina la riguardevole*, as the Sicilians call it, with measured praise. From Taormina they advanced along the coast to Messina, whence they sailed to Naples.

Dr. Carus's style is clumsy, contrasting curiously with the lightness of his matter. On a difficult subject he would be intolerable; but, balancing the merits of this book against its defects, we do not hesitate strongly to recommend it to all readers of German who are about to proceed to Sicily. Till that unhappy country is blessed with one of Murray's *Handbooks*—the next greatest boon to a constitution—it will make a very useful guide. We have in English no work on Sicily which will at all bear comparison with it. Brydone is antiquated—Mr. Bartlett's letter-press in the *Pictures from Sicily* is as poor as his views of the country are admirable. We know of no single English book, except these two, which treats of the island as a

whole. Old Bartlett's work in German is rather too large for travelling purposes. Nor is this work only to be recommended to intending travellers. It will recall to those who know Sicily many of the impressions which they received, and its *bonhomie* and minute recording of experiences—nay, even its little homely touches which give a peep into German *familiäres Leben* of a very pleasant kind—will make it a favourite with the general reader. We suspect that Dr. Carus is no great lover of England. Like most Germans who have breathed the air of the small vassal Courts of Central Europe, Russia's subject-allies, he misunderstands us a little. We hope that his book may meet a reception in this country which may make him, if our suspicion be correct, review his opinions on this subject. We sincerely hope we have not heard the last of him as a writer of travels. Meantime—to take leave of him in his own style, and to give him a hint which he will do well to take—may his last tome be as prosperous as his first, may his lobsters always be *wohlgeschmeckt*, may his *munden* and *verzehren* be words ever dear to his soul, and may his devout prayers for his own comfort be as constantly heard and less often recorded in print!

EMBASSIES AND FOREIGN COURTS.*

THIS book contains much useful and curious information. The author's views are in the main sound, and his style is lively, although sometimes disagreeably flippant. He professes to feel an intense disgust and weariness of the forms and frivolities of diplomacy, and he represents that many able men are debarred from serving England at foreign Courts, and that the powers of many more are frittered away on duties of no real importance. The author thinks—and many sensible people are inclined to concur in the opinion—that no real advantage is gained by all the stir, and fuss, and mystery that usually surround diplomatic business. Some bold speculators have even ventured to suggest that a good deal of the work of ambassadors might be done as well, and infinitely more cheaply, through the post-office. But this would be very hard dealing with the diplomatic body. It would be like taking the common-form business from the proctors, and expecting them to subsist, as an educated and upright class of men, upon the profits of the few cases that really require extraordinary care and skill. It may of course be answered, that this country would thrive as well if it maintained neither the proctorial profession nor the diplomatic corps. Still, he would be a sanguine man who should set about abolishing either class; and for our own part, we are for the present content to ask that an adequate number, and no more, of well-qualified and well-paid functionaries shall be employed, not to contrive or fulfil useless forms, but to do the real business to which circumstances may give occasion.

Recent occurrences have drawn the attention of men of plain sense and habits of business to the dealings of the Foreign Office, and they have observed that the methods of proceeding there are entirely different from their own. When two commercial firms have entered into an arrangement involving various stipulations, common experience teaches that it is best immediately to reduce the terms, as distinctly as possible, into writing. But, to a person of ordinary understanding it would rather appear, from the perusal of many treaties, that those who drew them up either had no fixed purpose, or strove industriously to disguise it. There is a description, in Macaulay's *History*, of the wrangling about trifles that went on at Ryswick among the professional negotiators, while Bentinck and Boufflers were quietly settling in an orchard the momentous questions thus indefinitely delayed. The picture is so very striking that one cannot help suspecting it to be a little overdrawn; and, indeed, there are one or two passages of the book before us that do not exactly square with Mr. Macaulay's statement—not, however, that we by any means intend to pin our faith upon "the Roving Englishman," as an unquestionable authority for facts. Like Mr. Macaulay himself, he has too great a love of strong effects to command our implicit confidence. But whatever may be the historical value of the picture of the conference-hall at Ryswick, it will serve equally well to illustrate the difference between the pretence of business and its reality. We maintain all over the world representatives who are sufficiently attentive to the national and to their own dignity—who are irreproachable in dress and equipage, and liberal in their invitations to an agreeable table. All this is very well, and an ambassador may flourish, on the strength of these qualities, for the greater part of his term of service. It happens, too, that talents of this order are found in abundance in that aristocratic class to which, somehow or other, the higher diplomatic appointments are usually confined. But when, on short notice, the day of trial comes, the polished courtier, the pleasant host, may possibly disappoint the reasonable expectations of his countrymen. We may lose credit, and even solid advantages, through the failure of a man of many pleasing gifts, but unequal to nice and difficult negotiation. And yet we have men in England who are quite capable of sustaining such a burden, and who, to their own intellectual vigour, are capable of adding all the grace and gentleness which some persons presume to claim as the peculiar heritage of imbecility.

If it be true, as contended by the author of this book, that the

* *Embassies and Foreign Courts. A History of Diplomacy.* By "The Roving Englishman," author of the "Pictures from the Battle-field," "Turkey," &c. London: G. Routledge and Co.

surest road to success in negotiation is by plain, straightforward dealing, it follows that what has hitherto been the mystery of diplomacy may be safely made accessible to the majority of mankind. Tradition, we know, is quite on the other side, and the usual practice of diplomatists has been to deceive, purely for deception's sake, when nothing could possibly be gained by artifice. But the new theory, however distasteful to veteran diplomatists, will be welcome to the English public, now somewhat weary of watching the grimaces, and tricks, and subterfuges which we have been assured are necessary to conducting properly the foreign affairs of a great nation. And not only may it be advisable to try, by way of a change, to practise a little honesty ourselves, but our author further recommends that we should give credit, also, for fairness of purpose to those with whom we are negotiating. He believes that "the prime fault of all recent negotiations with Russia was an evident predisposition to suspect her designs." But this, we apprehend, like much more that the "Roving Englishman" has written about the Turkish difficulty, must be taken with considerable allowance. It is true that the commonplaces of the daily newspapers did for a long time consist chiefly of denunciations of Russian perfidy, which we must take leave to say were, however unseasonable, by no means unsupported by the facts of history. But we are speaking now, not of the English press, but of English policy, and it must be remembered that Lord Aberdeen's Government incurred extreme unpopularity by doing the very thing that we are now told ought to have been done. The current charge against the Ministry of that day was that they had "an evident predisposition" not "to suspect the designs," but to trust too confidently to the reason and moderation of Russia, and to her own perception of her best interests. Statesmen who hoped against hope, and who were the last men in England to confess the necessity of war, certainly cannot be accused of showing "a vulgar disposition to suspect evil."

The diplomatic profession delights in vain distinctions, and in the multiplication of cumbrous formalities. We observe that, at the present moment, a technical difficulty has been raised to obstruct the intercourse of Russia and Turkey. An ambassador extraordinary has been named by the Sultan to attend the coronation of the Czar. But when he was on the point of starting, it was suddenly remembered that no envoy of Alexander has hitherto announced at Constantinople his accession to the Imperial crown. Hereupon it is pronounced, by the masters of diplomatic lore, that the sending of an ambassador to Moscow would be an undue concession. For all that is officially known at the Sultan's court, the Czar Nicholas still reigns over all the Russians, and it is impossible to invest his heir with an inheritance not yet vacant. Of course, the best official reasons may be given for employing this nice formality, and plain people, who fail to see the use of it, may congratulate themselves that the Ambassador Extraordinary has nothing of the least importance to do at Moscow, and that therefore, it cannot really matter much whether he goes there or stays at home. In diplomatic language, every ambassador and envoy, whether his mission be temporary or permanent, is Extraordinary; and every minister, whatever be the nature and extent of his powers, is a Plenipotentiary. The words were originally used to convey a meaning, and have been retained to create a sound. An ambassador represents the person of his sovereign on all occasions. The lower classes of representatives are only clothed with this august character in the actual transaction of official business. The practical inference from this rule would be, to disuse the more cumbrous Ambassador, and employ a functionary of humbler and less unwieldy dignity. It was perhaps to compensate representatives of the second class for the want of royal or imperial honours that they have been allowed to assume the voluminous title of "Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary" as their usual designation. To say that an ambassador is greater than the bearer of so long a name as this, will perhaps convey the strongest possible impression of how great a man he actually is.

Our author concludes his generally interesting and instructive book with a somewhat tedious and unnecessary profession of gratitude to the press for its appreciation of his former efforts. We cannot but look upon this gratitude as a specimen of what has been defined as "a lively sense of favours to come." We think also that the present work is by no means free from that tendency to personal vituperation which its author very industriously disclaims. We cannot help seeing, even if we had not known the fact before, that he is subject to a strong bias against a particular ambassador, and that he writes, perhaps unconsciously, under the influence of a prejudice which must weaken the authority of his conclusions. We see, also, that he is rather apt to sacrifice rigid truth to the temptation of writing what will be sure to please and amuse his readers. As an instance of this failing, let any one refer to p. 205. It contains an account of the consequences of conferring upon ambassadors' wives the title of ambassadress. The writer here discerned an opening for a few smart and lively sentences, and he has used it skilfully, but he cannot expect his readers to believe that he is describing what actually occurred. We discover throughout the book a good deal of exaggeration, and we suspect more. Nevertheless, it deserves attention as a vigorous attack upon formal, tricky, and obscure diplomacy, and as enforcing the demand, now often heard, for a simpler and more intelligible system.

THE DANES AND THE SWEDES.*

MR. SCOTT'S title-page is conceived quite like a title-page—we might almost say like a play-bill—of ancient date. He candidly sets the whole bill of fare before us, though we are a little puzzled with his geography. It may be a moot point whether Denmark includes "Schleswig-Holstein;" but surely no one ever doubted that it included Jutland and the Danish Islands. The next question is, How far does the fulfilment answer the promise? Pretty respectably, as things go. With a very high literary standard before us, we could not say very much for Mr. Scott; but considering the approbation lavished on incomparably worse writers, we are not inclined to say much against him. There was no special reason why he should have written a book; but there was no special reason why he should not. If his views are not brilliant or original, they are for the most part sound and sensible. When he writes in his own natural style, he lacks something in strength, something in polish, but he is clear and straightforward enough. But sometimes he thinks it necessary to affect liveliness—more frequently he affects fine writing. In either of these cases, the natural product is nonsense.

The chief objection to the book is that it belongs to the class of *More Last Words*. Mr. Scott, it seems, published a book called *The Baltic, the Black Sea, and the Crimea*, with which we are not acquainted, but which, he tells us, obtained a "favourable reception from reviewers and the public." He has therefore been "induced to look over his notes taken during a visit to Scandinavia, and, after adding other valuable matter, to arrange the whole in the present form for publication." The volume is therefore a mere piece of bookmaking. Observations made during a tour six years ago are worked up with information subsequently derived from the *Annuaire des Deux Mondes*, and other publications. No great amount of life and freshness is to be secured by such a process; and Mr. Scott's compilation is hardly needed by those familiar with the vigorous writings of Mr. Laing. But in these days the temptation to bookmaking is irresistible. All people have not read Mr. Laing—many people might not care to read so many octavos published so long ago. We are not disposed to quarrel with an author who gives us useful matter in any shape; and the *habitués* of the circulating library may do worse things than send for Mr. Scott's little book.

Mr. Scott travelled through the Duchies and Denmark Proper into Sweden, in 1850, during the war between Denmark and the German party in Schleswig-Holstein. He passed through the latter just at the moment of one of those long armistices which formed so curious a feature in the struggle. While in the Duchies, his sympathies do not come out very strongly on either side; but at a later stage he seems decidedly to fraternize with the Danes. The fact is that, up to the moment of the revolt, the former had not any practical grievances to redress, though there were certain constitutional questions which needed settling. The disputed question of the succession those who can may get up in the work of Dr. Twiss; but nobody seems to have denied that Frederick VII. was the lawful sovereign of all his dominions, and nobody accused him of being the oppressor of any portion of them—only it was possible that his successor might be some one whose rights might be less incontestable. The King's favourite scheme of a "Whole State"—a common constitution for all his territories—was as little acceptable to the patriotic Danish party as it could be to any German in existence. The watchword of the national party is "Denmark to the Eyder." No Dane denies the German character of Holstein, or contends for its indissoluble union with Denmark. The question at issue relates to Schleswig; and that Duchy is, in language and nationality, partly Danish, partly German. Historically, it is within the old limits of Denmark—within that *Danneværk* which protects them—within that boundary of the Eyder which used to bear the decisive inscription—

Eidora, Romani terminus imperii.

Schleswig was not a fief of the old Holy Roman Empire; and no one thought, till 1848, of its being a member of the present Germanic Confederation. The only reasonable question was, Is Schleswig a fief of Denmark, or a totally independent state? and this question was hardly a practical one while the King of Denmark and the Duke of Schleswig were one and the same person. The indissoluble union talked of between a fief of the Empire and a State external to it is a contradiction in terms.

Still there were questions to be settled, and the King's plan was probably not the best way to settle them. The dissentient party had a full right to be heard. They were perfectly right to assemble and to petition—they were surely not right to revolt before they could possibly receive any answer to their petition. Were their cause never so just before, it became unjust from that moment. When the German party flew to arms—when they called in foreign allies—when a German army invaded what was indisputably Danish territory, and subjected its inhabitants to heavy contributions—the contingent and doubtful wrongs of Schleswig were forgotten in the practical wrongs of Denmark, the national spirit was aroused, and the invaders

* *The Danes and the Swedes*: being an Account of a Visit to Denmark, including Schleswig-Holstein and the Danish Islands; with a Peep into Jutland, and a Journey across the Peninsula of Sweden; embracing a Sketch of the most interesting Points in the History of those Countries. By Charles Henry Scott. London: Longman and Co.

learned, at Fredericia and at Idstedt, what could be done by men fighting for all that was dearest to them on earth.

The result of this invasion of a brave and intelligent people in their own homes was the formation of an army more nearly resembling what one reads of in old Greece or mediæval Switzerland than often occurs in modern times. Mr. Scott tells us—

On landing at Toars, a fishing village only, we found crowds of men who had just quitted their various occupations, and were proceeding to join the army. Indeed, we encountered the same spectacle everywhere on this tour; hundreds were to be seen in carts or walking, making their way to the nearest towns, which generally presented an appearance of life and bustle from this circumstance. They were all respectably-dressed, well-conducted men, and formed a striking contrast to the tribe of ragamuffins one often sees decked out with a few tawdry pieces of ribbon, following the recruiting serjeant in England.

This may be; but were England invaded, doubtless she could produce soldiers in every way worthy to rank side by side with our Danish brethren.

Of the Danes themselves, and the generally flourishing state of the country, Mr. Scott speaks as favourably as nearly every one else:—

The civil war not only opened a direct route from Jutland to England, but led the Danish farmers to turn their attention more closely to the subject of cattle feeding, which has resulted in a total revolution of their system. Instead of selling the oxen lean as formerly, they now resort to a more profitable plan by fattening them upon bruised corn, and taking them to market in good condition. The breed of horses is excellent, and exportation constitutes another source of profit to the nation.

From the above statistical remarks it is evident that Denmark is in a flourishing state, that her prosperity is progressive, and that the condition of every class of people must consequently be ameliorated. The abolition of the Corn Laws, and other Free Trade measures of England, have principally contributed to this state of things. It is only when travelling through the agricultural countries of Europe that one fully comprehends the mighty bearings of those legislative acts, which while they benefit our home population, carry wealth and happiness to millions, spur mankind on to fresh exertions, give impetus to industrial pursuits, and promote civilization throughout the world. To show the extensive mercantile relations existing between England and Denmark, the simple fact may be stated, that while only eighty annually enter French from Danish ports, no less than four thousand vessels convey cargoes yearly from Denmark to England. . . . The Danes have within them the soundest elements of progress; their views of what is necessary to elevate the character and promote the happiness of a nation are enlarged. General and useful education is the foundation of their system, religious tolerance, the encouragement of arts, and the promotion of science, are its accessories. Much is, doubtless, required to perfect their new institutions, to regulate the social changes which follow political emancipation, and to arouse in them a clear perception that usage alone is not sufficient to constitute the wisdom of long continued customs. All these, however, will in due time be accomplished. They are not an impulsive people, but good sense leads them steadily forward to sound conclusions.

One of the most pleasing features of Denmark is the remarkable absence of poverty. We never met a beggar either in Copenhagen or during our wanderings through the islands, nor did we ever see individuals with external evidences of great distress; and we fearlessly assert, after having visited nearly every country of Europe, that there is not one amongst them which displays so little *apparent* wretchedness and misery: while, did such really exist, we believe they could no more be concealed than the sun's rays at noon on a cloudless day.

We have yet to see how all this may be affected by the late reactionary movement in Denmark. Mr. Scott comments only too forcibly on the unfortunate results of foreign interference in Danish affairs. A nation which, without the slightest aid, had so nobly defended its rights on the field of battle, has been something very like conquered by despotic chicanery. Austrian occupation, Russian intervention, and English neglect, have issued in the settlement of the Danish crown on a prince who will probably be little more than a Russian tool, while the internal fruit has been the practical annihilation of the liberal constitution of 1848. Surely there is here a moral. The absolute kings of Denmark and Norway deserved better of their subjects than any other line of despotic monarchs. Their despotism was originally a formal trust conferred by the people, and, notwithstanding occasional and individual exceptions, it was, on the whole, used for the good of the people. They so governed as to prepare their subjects for governing themselves, so that actual political liberty came as the natural crown and complement of a generally just and beneficent legislation. Yet, even under these favourable circumstances, it would seem that an *octroyée* constitution is but a sickly plant, and that, if freedom is to be lasting, the people must win it for themselves. The Norwegian constitution was the work of the people, and it flourishes after forty years of open or secret opposition. The Danish constitution was the grant of the prince, and it has vanished before attaining its eighth year.

Our author has many remarks on various points relating to Denmark, political, social, and antiquarian, which, if not very profound or original, are likely to be useful to some classes of readers, now that Englishmen are at last, after so long and strange a neglect, beginning to take some interest in their Scandinavian kinsmen. Mr. Scott writes throughout too much in the style of a guide-book, and he has the odious habit—which we critics regard as an intrusion on our own prerogative—of speaking of himself as “We.” In a review or other similar writing, the practice has both prescription and reason on its side. The reviewer does not speak in his own name, but in that of a body including others besides himself. In any case, “We” comprises both the actual writer and the revising editor; but there can be no possible occasion for this formula when a man records his individual adventures and opinions.

We cannot follow Mr. Scott into Sweden. Norway, the most interesting country of the three, he did not visit, and he says nothing about it. He contends earnestly for the restoration

of Finland to Sweden, and for the adoption of the King of Sweden and Norway as heir to the Danish crown, so as to unite all the Scandinavian kingdoms into one great confederacy. He does not inform us, however, whether the Fins—a race equally alien to Swede and Muscovite—care much for a change of masters. Nor does he consider what arrangements would be requisite, if Sweden and Finland were united, to preserve the dearly-bought liberties of Norway from being brought into jeopardy by so large an addition to the power of its sovereign.

THE ENIGMA.*

WE wish people would leave off writing novels about the origin of evil. Here is a book, evidently written by a lady, which in 301 small pages—beginning with three theological mottoes, and ending with nine stanzas of something which is neither a hymn nor a poem, three lines of asterisks, an extract from the Catechism, and a text of Scripture, printed in italics—sets forth something which may be a statement, or which may be meant for an explanation, of the difficulty. If it will make a dark subject any clearer, our readers are welcome to the explanation. Grace and Katherine sat together in a room of Wolchorley House. Katherine said she thought life an inextricable confusion. Grace looked at a print of the Madonna, and thought that “there seemed the solution of the mighty enigma.” Her cousin asked what she was thinking of, and she could not answer, because “the Infinite was stirring within her.” Grace was an only granddaughter, living with her grandfather, Sir Lionel Wolchorley, who used to say, “My fragile flower shall not be rudely plucked while I remain—and then—why then—” I hope she may be married, an ordinary man would have added, but Sir Lionel could never finish his sentence, because, said his old and trusty majordomo—“There never could be no h’end to it, for h’eternally Sir Lionel was a thinking of ‘er—‘eaven bless ‘er ‘eart.” Of course, Grace was one of the heavenly girls in whose mouths butter never melts, and Kate one of the audacious beauties who are introduced into novels as a foil to them. Sir Lionel informs the young women that Mrs. Percy, her son, Horace Wolchorley, and his friend Mr. Blaghe, intend to visit them. In the third chapter, a handsome clergyman, Ernest Mowbraye, and his mother, are presented to the reader. Messrs. Horace Wolchorley and Blaghe ask the son to go out fishing, to which Mr. Mowbraye replies—“What the order might not interdict, *per se*, time would not perhaps always concede to the many avocations of a clergyman’s life.” Then another clergyman comes in, who makes Grace an offer, and is refused. Afterwards, all the characters dine together. Mr. Horace Wolchorley, who had been brought to marry Grace, pays attentions to Katherine, Ernest Mowbraye meditates intensely over prints of the Cartoons. Mrs. Percy talks in a worldly-minded way to the old baronet, who is dreadfully shocked, and answers his granddaughter’s question, “What is the matter?” by saying, “Human hearts, my love. Sin and wrong, and their long mourning train of sorrows—this, *this* is the bitterness of death.” The old gentleman gets better, and there is a school-feast, a mysterious Irish harper, an old Scotch crone, and a certain amount of love-making between Horace and Katherine. Then there is a night-scene between Grace and Katherine, in which we seem to get rather nearer the origin of evil, for there is a good deal of quotation of texts, interspersed with a certain amount of small capitals and italics. Next comes a pic-nic, and a discovery of a MS. poem by Grace, about the Resurrection. Horace makes Katherine an offer—she is in love with him—but it all comes to nothing. A little girl is forbidden to get into a pony-carriage; but she does so, and gets her arm broken, which suggests some conversation about the Fall and the origin of evil, which Katherine considers mysterious and afflicting. Thereupon the handsome clergyman with “deep melancholic eyes” sets to work to solve the enigma. We give the following specimen of his solution. The italics are the author’s:—

Has not natural religion its type and counterpart in the physical world, found in the great law of cohesion, whereby *integral particles of a like nature are held together in a perfect whole.* (sic.) And does not this represent to you man . . . who, when he admitted the repulsive power of temptation, broke the parallel law of his perfect being.

There is a good deal more of the same kind, which “came” upon Katherine “like the smite of the angel of old.” We do not think that the book makes any further advance towards the solution of the enigma; and we know not whether our readers will agree with us in thinking that, under the circumstances, it would have been just as well to let it alone altogether. It is hardly worth while to pursue the story further. It is an ordinary novel of the most commonplace kind. All the good people get into trouble first, and get out of it afterwards; and all the bad people do just the reverse. There are some deaths, and some curious discoveries. Mr. Blaghe, the septic, is first converted by the handsome clergyman, and finally married to the handsome young lady who knows her own mind; whilst the handsome clergyman himself marries the dreamy young woman in whom the Infinite stirs. Then twenty-five years elapse—there is a general tableau over certain graves—the children of the principal personages enter, and marry—and the story ends with the asterisks, texts, and bits of catechism specified above.

* *The Enigma*: a Leaf from the Archives of Wolchorley House. By an Old Chronicler. London: John W. Parker and Son. 1855.

The distinctive feature of the *Enigma* is the extraordinary absurdity of the language. As if the subject were not hopeless enough in itself, the writer thinks it necessary to make it harder still by the most extraordinary phraseology that we ever remember to have seen. Many of the sentences are only to be paralleled in the examples by which Martinus Scriblerus illustrated his essay on the Bathos. This is how we learn that certain school children wetted their hair:—"All having clean pinafores and well-brushed hair sleeked down after the fashion of their race on such occasions, with the supererogatory application from the fountain."

Here is a lamentation over a woman who was married for her money, and bullied by her husband. We preserve the italics:—

Poor aching heart! . . . When, in progress of time, the time allotted for the attitude of feeling—

While yet upon life's sands the footprint lies
In shallow mould of "sad news" and "surprise"—

thou wast wed (for lucre's sake of thy worldly portion) to this one (whose heart was worn to little more than an anatomical fact through the constant "drop" of labour for the "bread that perisheth"), thy meek patience now casting its bread upon those chill waters shall find it again—"sown in tears," it is true, but "reaped in joy," when as [a favourite word of the author's] thine own spirit, purified from its human dross, hath set on earth and risen in heaven, &c. &c.

There is some sense, after all, in calling a book written on these principles, the *Enigma*. We have all heard of Asher's "abiding in his breaches," but is not the following rather a strange way of saying that nothing particular happened?—"Months passed, and the lonely heart at the glebe neither hastened nor tarried in its 'breach.'" Nor is this quite a commonplace description of the announcement of a death in the newspaper:—

And she? What raises her face, waning with unearthly pallor, as she sits, having in her hand the public intelligencer of the day? Had she indeed felt the cruel fact of that morning's post in his sad gaze? Not so; for when utterance came to her tremulous parted lips, it was "Little Ada! Oh! grandfather!" and one large tear, as it plashed on the page in her hand through the dead silence which followed, blurred the record line of sorrow to which her eye again instinctively turned. It was but a moment's impulse and deed on the part of Katherine to snatch the news letter from Grace, and dashing the index tear off the obituary, to pause on the unobtrusive paragraph, which, in another moment, with compressed lip, she read aloud, &c.

There is no particular harm in the *Enigma*. It is in no respect an offensive book, but we have hardly ever seen one in which the powers of the writer were so completely and ludicrously misconceived. We have noticed it principally because it affords a curious example of a very common mistake. There never was an age in which there was so much novel writing, and so much theological speculation, as there is in our own. As soon as any one has gone through any religious experience which leaves an impression on his mind, he—or more frequently she—makes it into a novel, on the principle that it cannot be uninteresting to others to read about anything which it was so deeply interesting to feel. The first requisite to a good novel is that the author should fully understand, and be master of, the matter on which he is going to write; and this can never be the case with religious experiences. The principles upon which they depend are so deep, so mysterious, so connected with considerations of all kinds, that very few persons indeed, however deeply they may feel them, can write about them without exposing themselves. "He is in heaven, and thou art on earth, therefore let thy words be few,"—this is no less true as a canon of criticism than in its original application. This is more particularly true for female novelists. Quick, minute observation and representation of the ordinary affairs of life, is their forte—the inculcation of broad principles is apt to be their foible. So long as Miss Bronte, Mrs. Gaskell, Miss Yonge, or Miss Edgeworth confine themselves to describing what they have seen, they are amongst our very greatest writers; but when they come to draw or to insinuate conclusions as to broad general principles, we always regret that they should have left their proper sphere. *Ruth*, for example, and *Mary Barton*, are exquisite novels, but they prove nothing at all, though we think their authoress intended that they should. *Jane Eyre* and *Shirley* are works of genius, but we think that they suffer, both artistically and morally, from some of the discussions introduced into them. Miss Austen has always seemed to us far the greatest of female novel writers, precisely because there is nothing at all in the nature of a principle, or a speculation, or a moral, from one end of her books to the other. They are all pure representations of the life with which she was familiar—all the principles are assumed, and the reader is not annoyed by their elaboration or illustration. There is no indication, however, in the *Enigma* of powers which would place the authoress in the class of writers to which we have referred. The novel, as a novel, is poor—as a theological tract it is bad.

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